

WHICH IS THE MAN?

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.



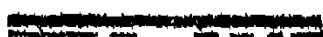
BY

MRS. MEEKER,

AUTHOR OF

ANECDOTES OF THE ALFAMONT FAMILY,

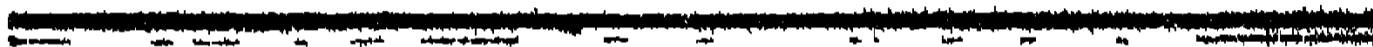
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concerted plans to promote the prosperity of the female part of his family.

Having got rid of this troublesome interloper, as Mr Price styled him, the evening passed off very agreeably, Ferdinand being upon the whole very much pleased with his host, who possessed a depth of understanding which his deficiency in point of elocution frequently prevented him from displaying to advantage. He had besides, a fund of general knowledge that rendered him, to a man of Lord Hartley's shining talents, a very agreeable companion; he therefore hoped they should be better acquainted, promising to repeat his visits when he returned to England, at the same time giving the old gentleman a most pressing invitation to visit him either in town or country, and expressing a wish to introduce him to his father, who had like him, he said, buried very superior talents

and

and knowledge in obscurity. Never perhaps had Price been so much flattered, as he was perfectly able to appreciate the very superior powers and merit of his guest ; nor was Duncan less satisfied ; indeed, he thought it next to impossible any body could dislike his worthy tutor, but had his doubts whether he would please so accurate a judge of men as his grandfather seemed to think Lord Hartley, who, from this slight investigation of Price's character, began to form much greater expectations of his pupil, whose vulgarisms in discourse, and low notions, he now placed solely to Barwell's account. He therefore hoped the instructions, and example of his uncle Aubrey, added to his own observations, would work a very salutary reform in his manners and pursuits, though he more than ever condemned his Grace's plan of education, which had certainly led his grandson to form connections more likely to pervert his morals than to preserve his innocence.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE following morning they had scarcely done breakfast before Duncan became very anxious to visit his former friends, and would have set out alone, if a look from Mr. Price had not induced Ferdinand to remind him he had promised to shew him every thing worthy notice in Coombe.

“ So I will, with the greatest pleasure,” was the reply ; “ but I must call upon my old master, the shoemaker ; you would not wish to be introduced to him ? ”

“ You are very much mistaken, I reckon

reckon him among the greatest curiosities your village affords."

"You are perfectly right, Marquis," said Price; "Simpson may almost be styled a phenomenon. I pride myself upon being among his friends, though Captain Barwell considers him a very low fellow, of whom nevertheless he stands in very great awe, therefore treats him with some degree of civility."

"'Tis excellent fun to see them together," rejoined Duncan; "for Simpson never scruples to contradict Barwell, when he makes any geographical or chronological blunders, and that he does continually."

"Then, pray, hasten to introduce me to this extraordinary character."

The young men therefore sallied forth, and were proceeding across some very pleasant fields which led to the village, Duncan anxiously pointing out the surrounding beauties.

beauties to his companion, who perceiving three ladies advancing, said,

“ Do you see who is coming in search of you ? ”

“ The Wilsons, by Jove ! ” was the reply ; “ now, an’t they very fine girls, particularly she in the middle ? ”

“ I am rather capricious in my notions of female beauty,” replied Ferdinand in a gay tone. “ In village nymphs I always look for artless innocence, diffidence, and many et ceteras, which would not disgrace even a modern belle. Now, according to Mr. Price, these ladies possess no inconsiderable share of art, and in my opinion a cunning woman is not a knavish fool : besides, he dropped some other hints not very much to their advantage which have but little prepossessed me in their favour.”

“ Well, I won’t pretend to say he has not perhaps done them justice ; but I was merely asking your opinion respecting their beauty, which

which I will admit is only skin deep; and by the pains they seem to be taking to adjust their dresses, 'tis my belief they have a design upon your heart, for they don't know you are a married man. I must accost them—
“Well, ladies, how have you done since we parted? you look as fresh and blooming as ever.”

Those he addressed made a sudden stop, and curtsied with less awkwardness than Ferdinand could have expected; and tho' very much over-dressed, considering the time of day, they made a much more fashionable appearance than he would have supposed even the gentry of Coombe exhibited: however, considering whom they wished to captivate, he thought it very excusable. A most smiling welcome awaited their former friend; nor was his truly elegant companion suffered to pass unnoticed, as, no wise dismayed by the account they had heard of his pride, they flattered them-

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selves

seives they might make so brilliant a conquest, though Duncan's favourite seemed to think her business was done, as she addressed him with the most familiar air, gave him her hand with the affected languor of a studied coquette, and though really a fine shewy girl, there was a forward wanton something in her air and manner which would have been as repulsive to Ferdinand as it appeared attractive to Duncan. They had merely left home for a walk, not supposing Lords were such early risers; however, they would return with the gentlemen, whom they hoped were going to see their aunt Barwell, as both she and their cousin the Captain were anxiously expecting a visit from his Lordship. To object to so kind a proposal was impossible, particularly as Marianne had seized Duncan's arm with the familiarity such ladies generally display when they suppose themselves upon the point of marriage with the favoured mortal they thus honour.



WHICH IS THE MAN?

CHAPTER XVI.

ELINOR had now an opportunity of forming some excellent resolutions, greatly assisted by her natural strong principles; and she determined not to encourage sentiments which might really be deemed inimical to delicacy, and which could only tend to render her miserable; as should the Marquis of Hartley regain his freedom, if he loved his wife, very possibly he would never make a second choice; and admitting he did, what reason had she to suppose it would fall upon her? Besides, even in

WHICH IS THE MAN

allow herself to form such a hope was very incompatible with her notions of female dignity. She therefore must and would consider it impossible she should ever be nearer related to Lord Hartley, whom she could not think it absolutely needful to shun, but whom she would in future treat with that proper reserve every young woman ought to observe towards married men of his age and figure.

The Marquis of Hartley, whom we shall sometimes take the liberty of styling Ferdinand, in imitation of his godfathers and godmothers, had never been more sensible than when laid upon his pillow, on this very night, that he had not absolutely married for love, but far more in obedience to the wishes of the best of parents, and to oblige his late father-in-law.

Melrose was formed to captivate;
even her Scottish accent was peculiarly
fascinating,

fascinating, not to dwell upon her other perfections; but what were they to him?—yet he was truly sorry she seemed likely to fall to the lot of a man very incapable of discerning her merits, and could not but lament they had not met sooner, as her fine eyes had betrayed a sentiment in his favour he by no means wished, though we will not say he was not flattered at having inspired, but was very much hurt to discover his own passions were not more under controul. However, even at the expence of his feelings, he resolved to preserve at least the appearance of indifference towards the beautiful girl, who had made him so sensibly feel he had a heart to dispose of, though he had long since parted with his hand: perhaps pride had as much share as principle in this determination; for Ferdinand was no “faultless monster,” nor had his fortitude been hitherto put to any severe trials. Love, it is said, has made even the wisest men act like fools.

Our hero was, however, determined not to put himself under the guidance of a Power represented blind, and who but too frequently leads his votaries to their destruction. Pride, as we have before said, supported by principle, made him resolve to conquer a passion it would have been criminal to cherish, particularly having no turn for romance, which might have induced him to build some aerial structures, such as are sometimes brought to perfection in a novel, but very seldom in real life; he therefore never for a moment forgot that he was married, nor even for a moment suffered his thoughts to dwell upon his wife's precarious state of health, and met the party at breakfast in his usual spirits, paid the accustomed compliments to his fair partner with unaffected ease, and then entered into conversation with his Grace respecting his tenantry. Their meal being over, "Now to business, Marquis," said the Duke, "though I must petition for another day."

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“ We shall all join you, Sir,” said Lady Helen.

Ausby spoke to the same purpose. Lord David, and his son affecting to consider themselves only as guests, remained silent. Elinor's eyes seconded her mother's entreaties, though she spoke not ; but to her infinite joy the Marquis readily agreed to postpone his departure till the following morning. The ladies therefore retired ; the steward was sent for, and in less than an hour the Orkney estate was to the Duke's great joy, once more free, and as the day was fine, Ausby proposed a walk to the young gentlemen, wishing to show them some very fine plantations at a distance from the house ; they readily agreed, and Lord David declared his intention of accompanying them ; but Duncan entered a caveat against scarlet cloaks being worn by any of the company.

“Why, pray, are we likely to meet or pass any horned cattle?” asked Cameron.

“It matters not,” replied the rustic, “only let me desire you would stay at home and nurse the cat, if you can’t venture out such weather as this without being wrapped up as if it was frost and snow.”

Lord David perceiving the Marquis of Hartley did not even seem inclined to incumber himself with a great coat, also objected to his son’s wearing his pelisse; he must accustom himself to his native climate, as he would certainly not spend his life in Italy. Ausby conducted the party (the Duke remained at home) through some beautiful plantations to a rural cottage, situated upon an eminence commanding a delightful prospect, where they found a very elegant cold collation, and several sorts of morning wines, set out with infinite taste, of which they all very readily partook, not a little flattered by the fresh
proof

proof of the Duke's hospitality, who wished to render every thing particularly agreeable to Lord Hartley.

Cameron declared it reminded him of the Italian *fêtes al fresco*.

"Which sound very fine when described," observed Lord Hartley, "but are the most insipid things in nature to the guests. I appeal to you, Mr. Ausby, for the truth of my observation."

"I perfectly agree with your Lordship; the French have really a taste for *fête champêtres*, and the climate of the southern part of France is adapted to such amusements."

"Else we, John Bulls," rejoined Lord Hartley, as Mr. Cameron styles us, "would shine as conspicuous in that as in every other species of diversion invented by our more insidious neighbours, upon whose notions we generally improve; but our climate

climate is too uncertain to admit of
champêtres, or *al frescoes*,

Yet England, injured climate ! I forgive
Thy spleen inflicting mists, thy gloomy days,
And think thy clouds, but intercept those rays ;

which rage in France, and still more in
Italy ; for even in the far-fam'd plains of
Lombardy I should be tempted to ex-
claim—

Oh, native soil ! oh, verdure, woods, and strains,
Where are ye ? where thy grassy prospects, and thy
vernal air ?

For where else can you enjoy the real beau-
ties of nature in such perfection ?”

“ Surely, your Lordship will allow there
is a great deal of the sublime and beautiful
in the environs of Naples,” said Lord
David.

“ Undoubtedly, and many sweet spots
upon the banks of your favourite Arno,
and ~~the~~ of the Brenta. Like Goldsmith,
I think

I think “man is the only growth that dwindles there.” And ah! how much are they unlike the sons of Briton, who,

Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
True to imagin'd right, above controul,
While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself a man.

“One would think,” cried the delighted Duncan, “you had been telling the company what my thoughts were like, for I will swear we are of the same opinion, though I could not have expressed even my own ideas half so well; for I am sure, and I will ever maintain it, the English are the first nation under the sun.”

“Then we have only to hope Lord David and Mr. Cameron will make some allowances for *John Bull's* prejudices,” replied the laughing Marquis, “though I really think Florian right, when he says,

En tous pays tous les bons cœurs sont frères—

“Nay, that an’t fair, Marquis,” cried Duncan; “I don’t like to lose a word you say ; and though I am sure you never speak *gibberish*, I can’t make head nor tail of what you said.”

Mr. Ausby explained his Lordship’s meaning, and he coincided in his opinion, swearing he would study French, since they had such clever writers. They now prepared to return home by a different road from that they came. The descent they pursued was rather rapid, but was rendered perfectly safe, an excellent gravel walk having been made to accommodate the Duke. Mr. Cameron preferred walking upon the turf, from an idea that the gravel was slippery, though in fact the path he had chosen was much more so, which he soon experienced ; as, notwithstanding the caution with which he trod, he lost his footing, and to preserve himself from falling, caught hold of Lord Hartley, who was nearest to him, which

which did not prevent him from measuring his length exactly before that nobleman, who, owing to the sudden jerk, and the stumbling block in his way, pitched forward over the young man; and falling upon his left shoulder, received so severe a contusion, that he was hardly able to rise.

Perceiving he was very much hurt, Lord David was the first to make excuse for his awkward son, as he raised his head at the same moment with so woful a countenance, that this tender parent could no longer find in his heart to condemn his darling Orlando, who, having fallen with some force upon the gravel, had cut his handsome face in several places. Duncan only thought of assisting his favourite Marquis, exclaiming, “ I never will suffer that poor devil to go out with me again ; he is always endangering somebody’s life. I am sure you are very much hurt ; curse his spindle-shanks,

he can't walk like other people—But how do you find yourself?"

"Oh, much better already; my whole weight bearing upon my shoulder rendered it very painful at the moment; but it is already abated; at all events I shan't display my bruises, which I am fearful Mr. Cameron will."

Ausby expressed his regret in the politest and most feeling terms; but the Marquis's remark inducing both him and Duncan to contemplate the crying countenance of the mortified being, who had the moment before put his finger to one of the little cuts he had received, and having withdrawn it bloody, was near fainting, so much was he dismayed.

Duncan did not even attempt to restrain his mirth, observing, "There was one of the sweetest countenances that ever graced
the

the shoulders of a man disfigured for life. Poor fellow, how he bleeds! do let's hasten home, and see what can be done to preserve his beauty. My grandfather has got a calf, I know; 'tis only having it killed, and supplying the cawl while warm to his face; that and keeping his bed for a fortnight may have the desired effect."

Notwithstanding the pain he was in, Lord Hartley could not help laughing at this ludicrous advice, which was seriously delivered; but the person to whom it was addressed was too much affected by his misfortune to pay much regard to what was said, though Lord David was endeavouring to console him, by remarking the cuts he had received were very trifling, and would certainly leave no scars when once healed; but upon hearing Ausby declare the necessity of sending for a surgeon the moment they reached the Castle, to examine farther Lord Hartley's shoulder, both him
and

and Orlando thought it necessary to make some excuses for what had befallen him. Ferdinand made very slight of it, though he evidently could not raise his left arm ; they therefore hastened home, and being seen advancing by the Duke, who was anxious to learn how they relished their entertainment, he hastened out to meet them, and soon learnt from orator Duncan what had happened ; while Ausby dispatched a servant for the surgeon which attended the family.

His Grace was exceedingly shocked when he understood how material a sufferer Lord Hartley had been through Cameron's awkwardness, whom Duncan ridiculed without mercy ; nor could Lord David venture to stand forth in his defence, as the voice of the company was against him. In less than half an hour Lady Helen and her daughter, who had been dressing for dinner, joined them, the former

former anxiously enquiring if any accident had happened, as they had seen Mr. Mildmay riding full speed across the park. Cameron was holding a handkerchief to his face, not even having ventured to wash it, till he had previously taken the advice of the expected surgeon, and had more than once wished himself at Florence, where he affirmed there were some of the most eminent men in that line in Europe. The Duke answered Lady Helen's enquiries, by stating the exact truth, which Ferdinand endeavoured to soften. The accident was a mere trifle, a slight bruise he supposed, and required merely a little warm vinegar to effect its use ; but Mr. Aufby, having kindly insisted upon a medical practitioner being sent for, he thought politeness required his waiting for the gentleman's advice, whom he was only fearful would think he had been summoned upon a very frivolous occasion.

Elinor's

Elinor's countenance betrayed the strong interest she took in whatever concerned his Lordship. She wished, like her mother, to have expressed her regret, but could find no words adapted to her feelings ; therefore, before she had ventured to speak, the surgeon was announced, and immediately informed why he had been summoned. Mr. Ausby had acted with his usual prudence ; he observed, sprains were sometimes more difficult to manage than even broken bones, proposing to accompany Lord Hartley to his dressing-room, who requested he would first examine Mr. Cameron's face. To this Cameron as instantly submitted, notwithstanding the Duke's evident displeasure. The really skilful practitioner had some difficulty to keep his countenance, while he scrutinized the young man's physiognomy, Duncan made so many ridiculous remarks, but assured his patient the cuts were of the slightest nature. He would send something to bathe them
which

which would prevent their leaving any marks, and he made no doubt they would be perfectly healed in the course of the next day. He then retired with the Marquis, whom the Duke, Duncan, and Auby, chose also to accompany into his dressing-room, where the patient being stripped, displayed a very formidable bruise, which would require frequent fomentations. The surgeon said, indeed his Lordship had been very fortunate, in not having dislocated or broke his collar bone ; however, he must submit to wear a dressing-gown for at least a couple of days, as it would be highly improper to suffer any thing to pass upon the injured part ; but presumed so short a confinement as that would not condemn him to keep his bed, or even become very irksome to him.

“ I don't know, doctor, because, if you prohibit my wearing a coat, you will preclude my joining the party in the saloon.

loon. Besides, I did intend leaving the Castle to-morrow morning, and since you wish to render me a troublesome guest—”

“Not a word more upon that subject, I intreat, Marquis,” cried the Duke: “if any thing could reconcile me to your having met with such a misfortune, it would be the idea (since there is no danger likely to arise) of retaining you a short time longer in Scotland.”

“It would be the height of imprudence in his Lordship to think of travelling till the pain and swelling is abated,” rejoined the surgeon; and he was so strongly seconded by both the Duke and Aubby, that the Marquis readily agreed to stay till he received the doctor’s permission to depart, informing that gentleman why he was rather anxious to be pronounced in a state of convalescence.

The surgeon now departed; and Duncan declaring he would not leave his new friend
till

till he turned him out, remained with Lord Hartley, while the Duke and Aufby returned to the ladies, who volunteered their services to keep the invalid company during his confinement, and were not sorry Mr. Cameron also thought fit to keep his room, as it relieved them from the irksome task of conversing with so frivolous a being, who had not even the sense to conceal that his own dear self was the object of his idolatry.

CHAP. XVIII.

DURING the three succeeding days, which both the Duke and Ausby spent chiefly with Lord Hartley, they both became so sincerely attached to him, that they looked forward to his approaching departure with real regret, and his Grace resolved to spend the winter at Nice, or wherever else Lady Hartley chose to take up her abode, purposely to enjoy the company and conversation of her amiable husband, who sincerely rejoiced when he learnt his Grace's final determination, and anticipated the satisfaction it would give the Marchioness, when she learnt what an agreeable

able

able reinforcement he had made to their party. Ausby was well convinced Lord Donalbain would reap infinite advantage from being frequently in company with Lord Hartley, which he did not fail hinting to the Duke ; and this, in addition to the sincere regard he already felt for that nobleman, had induced him, much more than his fears for his own health, to think of venturing abroad ; and as the time for his Lordship's departure drew near, they agreed to meet in London by the middle of the ensuing month, when both parties hoped to have every thing in readiness for their approaching departure ; and thus was their plan finally arranged on the last evening the Marquis proposed remaining at the Castle, when Duncan observed, “ Why you are going great part of the way I so lately came, Marquis ; and I should like to visit Coombe once more before I went to France : so suppose you allow me grand-dad, to take the opportunity of crossing

crossing the country with my good friend, if he has no objection : mind me, because, as Daddy Price used to say, it will be a saving to both, and we ought not to squander money away when there are so many poor creatures who stand in need of all the rich can spare."

"An excellent thought, my friend," replied Ferdinand, "I have really formed a very high opinion of your worthy Daddy Price."

"He is a worthy good old soul as ever broke bread, and if you will pay him a visit he will treat you like a prince.-- Now that's a ~~foolish~~ foolish speech, and not likely to tempt you to go : however, he is, like ourselves, a true-born Englishman, and will give you a hearty and a hospitable welcome, and will set before you the best his house affords, and that is sure to be something wholesome and substantial."

"I never wish to be any restraint upon
your

your actions, my dear Duncan," replied the Duke; "therefore, since your kind friend has no objection to your plan, you shall accompany him as far as your road will admit of your enjoying his company; but I would have you return here, as I should not like your proceeding to London alone."

"That can be very easily obviated," observed Lord Hartley, "if the Marquis has no objection to accompany me to my little cottage, where I promise him as cordial a welcome as he flatters me I should meet with at Coombe, where I will accompany him, as a few hours will waft us across the channel, and will either return into Wales, or give the Marchioness the meeting at Bath, whichever she prefers; nor need these arrangements hasten your Grace to London, as Lord Donalbain will, I hope, take up his abode in Grosvenor-square, at least till your arrival."

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It is needless to add, no objections were made to this very judicious plan, as the Duke conceived it to be, and expressed his gratitude towards the proposer in the politest terms. Lord David renewed his former invitation to Lord Hartley, who promised, if he did visit Italy, to make some stay at Florence, and with this sort of negative consent his Lordship was forced to appear satisfied ; indeed, every thing he had concerted since his arrival in Scotland had fallen out exactly contrary to his wishes. He was sensible he had considerably lost ground in his father's esteem ; nor had the elegant Orlando made any favourable impression upon the old man ; and instead of making a friend, by a concatenation of disagreeable circumstances, they had rather made an enemy of Lord Hartley, who certainly might have it in his power, in a very short time, to have provided in the most liberal manner for the unfortunate Mr. Cameron. But, if the party did visit Italy,

Italy, he must try some more effectual means to obtain the friendship of the faithful orator, whose protection might be of singular service to his son, whom he really was not rich enough to bring forward with that eclat he could have desired.

On the following morning, however, the two young Peers quitted the Castle. Duncan, to his infinite amusement, attended by a valet and footman of his grandfather's appointing, and whom he protested he should be at a loss to employ, but hoped Lord Hartley would give him a few necessary instructions during their journey, that he might not have to blush for him when they reached his father's. Elinor saw them depart with a sigh; perhaps it was reciprocal, though Ferdinand himself he had brought his passion due subjection, and no longer considered the lovely Scotchwoman with any improper degree of partiality. Certain it is, he

VOL. II. looked

looked forward with pleasure to his approaching meeting with his wife, and continued resolute in treating Elinor as the betrothed bride of Duncan, whose frankness he admired, and whose bluntness greatly amused him.

On the second day after their departure, Lord David and his dear Orlando made their parting bow, hoping to meet his Grace and the family again in London, hinting they might as well travel as far as their road went together, as they should be ready to leave England at a moment's warning.

"We shall already be a very large party," replied the Duke, "and you will do well to delay as little as possible upon the road; whereas Lady Hartley's weak health, and my inability to bear much fatigue, will induce us to take our time; we should therefore only be a restraint upon each,

Italy or other. I will visit Florence, should I prolong my tour: let that promise content you; and accept this trifle, Orlando," putting a five hundred pound note into his hand, "to make some addition to your wardrobe as you go through Paris."

Cameron was profuse in his thanks, and hoped by means of this purse to be able to dazzle the insensible Elinor, should she visit the Grand Duke's dominions; though she had hitherto turned all his fine speeches into ridicule, and plainly given him to understand he would only waste his time and his health in attempting to persuade her she would shine a first-rate belle at the Tuscan Court, when she appeared there as his bride.

No one was sorry for their departure; the Duke declared he breathed easier; Aubrey acknowledged Lord David had lived so long abroad he was become too
C 2 much

much of an Italian either to please or be pleased with English society. Lady Helen coincided with her husband, and Elinor, secretly hoped they would never again revisit the old Castle.

“ Well, but now do give me your real opinion of Duncan,” said the Duke.

“ That he possesses an excellent heart and very good principles,” replied Ausby, “ and I think in Lord Hartley’s society his manners will soon acquire sufficient polish to render him every thing you could wish.”

“ He will never be a Hartley, Charles : indeed, I never yet saw that young man’s equal in any respect—What a superior education he must have received, and what a superior understanding does he continually display !”

“ Very true, your Grace, his penetration seems almost intuition, and he certainly adorns every subject upon which he discourses by the most splendid eloquence ;
that

that he is a most complete orator I am convinced; eloquent, entertaining, persuasive, strong, and pathetic, as occasion requires; for he has arguments, wit, and feeling at his command; still I am convinced he will ever have a great many enemies."

"Why so, my dear Charles," demanded the Duke, with some anxiety, feeling a peculiar interest in every thing that concerned Lord Hartley. "Why should such a man have many enemies? I know you think I am prejudiced in his favour; you may be right; for I must ever recollect I owe my present existence to his bravery and humanity! But what are his failings?"

"Ambition, my dear Sir, is his principal failing. He would make a great first minister in France, little inferior perhaps to Richelieu, but is certainly rather too tenacious of his own opinion and independence to make it wished he should ever guide the helm in Great Britain, as he would only continue in place while he

governed the whole cabinet. I therefore hope he will continue to pursue his present line of political conduct, and never strive for power, as he is certainly a true constitutional and practical patriot; a sincere lover, and, I am convinced, a jealous asserter of the natural, the civil, and the religious rights of his country; but he would not quarrel with the crown for some slight stretches of the prerogative; therefore, though I agree all his sentiments are liberal and elevated, still I repeat his ruling passion is unbounded ambition, which, when supported by great abilities, and crowned by great success, makes what the world calls "a great man." I think you may also discern he is rather too conscious of his own superior talents, though he is a most agreeable and lively companion in social life. However, he has begun his career by acting the patriot, and I am inclined to believe will perform his part so well, he will sooner or later be adopted by the public as
their

their chief; at all events he will make a great and shining figure in the annals of his country, as he certainly possesses all those qualities which none but a great man can have, with as few failings as generally fall to the common lot of wretched and imperfect human nature."

"Well, well," rejoined the Duke, "rather peevishly, "I should not like him so well were he more perfect. Laudable ambition prevents men of his age from going into the follies of the day; and though there may be something to condemn, there is much more to admire in the Marquis of Hartley; and I am truly rejoiced Duncan has made himself such an interest in his heart."

"Had we searched Europe, your Grace would not have found a more eligible companion for Lord Donalban; and I protest to you I feel, though I am sensible it is wrong, more inclined to admire than condemn the very failings I have remarked

in our young friend. Lord David thought him prejudiced in favour of England, to do I; yet I rather applaud than blame the *amor patriæ* which glows in his bosom. But I have long wished to ask your Grace, how it happened, since his father is still living, he should, even as next heir, have succeeded to the Hertley title and estates?"

"His grandfather having been attainted, I rather suppose the direct male succession might have been opposed; but as the husband of Lady Frances Cameron, the ministry probably did not object to his claiming the title. How the matter was managed I can't pretend to resolve, but some courtesy, I dare say, was shewn, and if Lady Frances made no objections, no one else dared."

"They seem a very happy couple," observed Elinor.

"I dare say they are," replied the Duke, "though I think it very probable, as they were so nearly related, it was a sort of marriage

riage *de convenance*. However, be that as it may, I am convinced he makes an excellent husband."

"I am certain his conduct is founded upon principle," said Ausby, "therefore I dare say he makes a point of acting up to duty, yet I think many men are likely to make better husbands. A woman of very superior parts an ambitious man sometimes thinks a rival too near the throne, though he would despise even a beauty who was deficient in sense. It may appear paradoxical, but in my opinion a woman must possess more perfections than probably ever fell to the share of any one individual of either sex, either to make or to be completely happy with Lord Hartley. I may be mistaken in my conjectures, when we see him and the Marchioness together, we shall be better able to judge."

"I never heard you so severe, my dear tutor," cried the astonished Elinor."

"I meant not to be so, my dear girl. I
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am only certain even the most unbounded love for her person would not blind Lord Hartley to his mistress's imperfections ; yet he will never be deficient in point of attention towards any of the sex, but I really think they must be more than mortal to possess his love, deserve his esteem, and be admitted into his confidence ; in short, as I said before, to make him happy, and to be completely so themselves ; they must, to speak in the language of your favourite Pope, be

Blest with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day ;
Must even love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter, with unwounded ear :
Charm by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most where she obeys :
Reserve with frankness, art with truth ally'd,
Courage with softness, modesty with pride ;
Fixed principles, with fancy ever new,
Shake all together, it produces—you.

This was said, looking at Lady Helen,
who gayly replied, “ Thank you for your
compliment.

compliment, Charles ; I only hope the Marchioness of Hartley adds beauty to your catalogue of female virtues, and then I think ambition must strangely have deadened the heart of her agreeable husband, if he is not truly sensible of her merits."

"He may be all that, and even make her happy, and yet not be so himself."

"Well, we will not argue the point any farther," said Lady Helen ; "only remember, Elinor, men of the most brilliant talents do not always make the best husbands ; nor perhaps do women of the same description make the best wives."

The ladies now retired, and the gentlemen went to take a stroll in the park, and to talk over their intended journey.

CHAPTER XIX.

LATE in the third evening after they left the Castle, the young travellers reached the rural but truly elegant abode of Mr. Cameron, senior, who was at the door when the chaise stopped, but rather checked his joy when he perceived his son was not come alone, and immediately conducted his two friends into a very handsome parlour, where they were met by the mother and wife of Lord Hartley, who, for a few seconds, did not even notice Lord Donalbain, who stood enjoying a meeting between people evidently so dear to each other. .

Mr.

Mr. Cameron, though much fairer, had been as handsome a man as his son, and had still, though between forty and fifty, great pretensions to manly beauty. He was much stouter than the Marquis, but appeared to enjoy an excellent state of health ; and though few men lived a more secluded life, he possessed talents which might have led him to fame, had he chose like his son to have exerted them. Mrs. Cameron was a few years the youngest, and bore much the greatest resemblance to the Marquis in point of features and complexion, and was even now a very beautiful woman. Their's had been one of those very few love matches which are not followed by repentance ; mutual esteem, and the tenderest connubial attachment, had succeeded the excess of love, which induced them, in spite of numerous obstacles, to unite their destinies ; indeed, it might truly be said—

They were the happiest pair of human kind :

The rolling year its various course perform'd,

And

And back returned again :

Another and another smiling came,

And saw their happiness unchang'd remain :

Still on her golden chain

Harmonious concord did their wishes bind ;

Their studies, pleasures, taste, the same.

Both exulted in their beloved Ferdinand, who appeared to have inherited the peculiar virtues of both, who had no other tutors but themselves, till he attained his tenth year, at which period he was sent to Eton, from thence to college, and then, with a gentleman perfectly calculated to form both his principles, mind, and morals, upon the continent. Various circumstances had brought about a very strict intimacy between his parents, the Hattley and Hanson families ; and it had long been resolved, should the young people approve of their intention, to unite them still more strictly by union of Ferdinand and Lady Frances, who had been intimate from children, the former generally spending part of every vacation while he remained

mained at school and college, either at Lord Hartley's town or country house, and during these visits he made himself such an interest in the heart of his lovely cousin, that she readily entered into the family views: indeed, having lost her mother before she attained her tenth year, she had spent great part of her time in Wales with the father and mother of the man she adored, before she even knew the signification of the word love. His taste insensibly became her's, and she devoted to intense study many of those hours young people of her age spend at the toilet, or in a round of pleasure which frequently produces satiety.

During Ferdinand's absence she spent most of her time at Lanelthy, where she was often visited by her father, then in a very declining state of health, and who grew very anxious to see her married to the man of her choice; for her predilection

lection in favour of Ferdinand was no secret to him, before he departed this life for a better. Mr. Cameron therefore wrote to recal his son, setting forth with true parental affection the great advantages of the proposed match, and dwelling with great justice upon the merit, beauty, and accomplishments of Lady Frances Cameron, whose rank and fortune he considered as very secondary recommendations to a man of sense and discernment ; urging, in short, every thing 'likely' to induce Ferdinand (whom he knew did not absolutely return his fair cousin's passion) to accede to their wishes.

The youth, though flattered to find himself the object of so fine a woman's exclusive preference, took a short time for reflection before he answered his father's letter. If Lady Frances had any failing, in his ~~opinion~~ she was too learned. Had she been blest with half her sense, he would
have

have thought her much nearer perfection ;
indeed he conceived she was—

With understanding quite o'er-run,
And by too great accomplishments undone.

Yet to give such reasons for rejecting her,
at the certainty of wounding his father in
the person of his best friend Lord Hartley,
was very foreign from his nature ; he there-
fore returned such an answer as he knew
would meet the approbation of both, which
he followed almost immediately in person,
and in less than six weeks after his return
entered the holy pile with every apparent
prospect of felicity, at least if happiness is
supposed to be the portion of the noble and
affluent, as his father-in-law readily ob-
tained permission for him to assume the
second title in his family, and immediately
settled half his fortune upon him and his
daughter ; nor was Mr. Hanson behind
hand in point of liberality ; and Mr. Came-
ron, who was also very rich, made over

Two-thirds of his income to him upon his marriage. Blessed therefore with a most beautiful bride, who really adored him, in possession of unbounded affluence, and raised to a peerage, could Ferdinand have any reason to regret he had complied with his father's wishes? He endeavoured to convince himself he ought rather to rejoice than repine, though he sincerely regretted his worthy father-in-law, who departed this life without even a sigh of regret six weeks after he had bestowed his daughter upon the only man he thought deserving of her.

This melancholy event prevented the new married couple from going into public for a short time, as both wished to pay every respect to the memory of so good a man. Their *tête-à-têtes* therefore became very frequent, and from a very praise-worthy motive the Marchioness wished to display her knowledge to a man so capable of appreciating her remarks, and of arguing
upon

upon those subjects she had made her study. Ferdinand ever did her ample justice ; but soon wished a less learned woman had fallen to his share, though he admired her talents, acknowledged the superiority of her understanding, but, as Ausby had feared, began to think her a rival too near the throne, and to wish she had contented herself with endeavouring to please instead of endeavouring to astonish him by the depth of her studies, not that she was a pedant. But as Young justly observes,

Naked in nothing should a women be,
But veil her very wit with modesty,
Let man discover, let not her display,
But yield her charms of mind with sweet delay.

Their first mourning over, they went to London. The Marquis then took his seat in the House of Peers, and as has been already told, soon displayed his real knowledge respecting the relative political and commercial interests of every country in Europe,

Europe, particularly his own, nor were his political abilities his only talents ; his eloquence, which Ausby had very justly defined, was peculiar and spontaneous ; it resembled sometimes the thunder, and sometimes the music of the spheres, never attempting to conduct the understanding through the painful subtilty of argumentation, but rather lightened upon the subject, and reached the point by the flashings of the mind, which, like those of his eye, were felt but could not be followed. Indeed he seemed formed to create, subvert, or reform, as he possessed an understanding, a spirit, and an eloquence to summon mankind to society, or to break the bonds of slavery asunder, and to rule the wilderness of free minds with unbounded authority. Was it therefore astonishing he should be conscious of his own superiority, or that he should be ambitious ? Such a man particularly required to unbend his mind in gay and social converse when alone with his

his

his wife ; but Lady Hartley, naturally of a grave disposition, and particularly averse to trifling, was not formed to render home pleasant to him ; he therefore, though not very fond of tavern society, frequently joined the parties formed by his brother officers, to avoid a *tête-à-tête* with his wife, to whom he allowed a *carte blanche* respecting the regulation of their household, and of her own time ; but felt less and less inclined every succeeding day to devote his own to hearing her learned disquisitions upon the most abstruse subjects. Owing to a fright she met with returning from her diurnal airing, she miscarried, and was so long, in consequence of this misfortune, confined to her room, her medical attendants declared she had every symptom of a decline.

During her illness Ferdinand seldom left home, nor did he fail to visit her whenever she was able to receive and converse with him,

him, and seconded the physicians very strenuously, when they recommended her removal into Wales, whither he drove her in his curricule, as air and gentle exercise were considered as very likely to accelerate her recovery. Her spirits, never very high, were more than ever depressed, and she devoted so much of her time to her favourite occupation, reading, while at Lancelthy, and took so little exercise, seldom going out but at the solicitation of Ferdinand, who having been obliged to pay a visit to Hartley Castle, in Lancashire, found her so much worse when he returned, he sent for the physician that had always attended her from London, who ordered her to Lisbon or Nice. She was very averse to the journey, till she understood Ferdinand intended to accompany her; and Mrs. Cameron, by his desire, engaged a most lively amiable middle-aged lady of her acquaintance to be of their party, as an additional companion to Lady Hartley, who could
certainly

certainly wish, he conceived, to have some female besides her attendants of the party, and he knew neither his father or mother ever designed to quit the healthy romantic cottage of Lanelthy. Thus were matters situated when a letter arrived from Mr. Hanson to Mr. Cameron, who requested Ferdinand would undertake to settle that worthy man's business at Orkney Castle, hinting the jaunt was likely to prove very amusing, as he would be doubtless introduced to the hitherto exiled heir, of whom he desired a minute account, that he might be able to judge whether the Duke of Orkney or himself had pursued the wisest method respecting the education of their future representatives. Ferdinand gaily promised to do the young gentleman strict justice, and immediately set out for London, where he found Mr. Hanson not quite so ill as he had feared, but who acknowledged such a journey was too formidable an undertaking for a man of his advanced years,

years, but as he did not wish to offend the Duke, requested he would affirm his being confined with the gout. Ferdinand promised to conform to his wishes. We shall now return to Lanelthy cottage, and introduce Lord Donalbain to its amiable inhabitants.

CHAP. XX.

LADY Hartley was a remarkable fine woman; and though her complexion no longer glowed with health, and a sort of habitual dejection was apparent in every look and word, she struck Duncan as being exceedingly handsome; which he remarked in his usual blunt way, and soon found himself so much at home, that he undertook to relate every thing that had befallen his friend since his arrival at Orkney Castle, not sparing his uncle and cousin, whom he placed in such a ridiculous light, that he excited the mirth of the whole party.

Mr. Cameron rejoiced that his dear Ferdinand had arrived so very *a-propos* for the Duke's preservation ; as, though unacquainted with that nobleman, he should have grieved to have heard he had owed his death to the fury of an enraged animal.

The ghost scene was next related, Duncan not forgetting to observe, that the room having once been occupied by an uncle of his, who had died, it was supposed, in a prison of the Spanish Inquisition, had greatly encreased even Lord David's terror.

" His Lordship was most probably very much attached to his brother," Mr. Cameron remarked ; " in which case, admitting he for a moment thought the rat's screams had any reference to him, his terror ought to be considered as a proof of his fraternal affection."

" You never was more, mistaken in your born days, my good Sir," cried Duncan,
" for

“ for Price, the steward, told me, both my grandfather, my uncle Ausby, in short all the family, suspected Lord David had either purposely, or imprudently, betrayed his brother into the power of some people with names as long as my arm, and which I can’t remember, and this very idea makes the Duke almost dislike him; and I am sure uncle Ausby bears him no very good will, does he Marquis ?”

“ I was too short a time an inmate of Orkney Castle, to make any very particular remarks upon his Grace’s behaviour towards Lord David,” replied Lord Hartley, “ though I must acknowledge, I did not think he stood very high in the good graces of either his father or brother-in-law, which I attributed to his foreign notions and manners. You must be better acquainted with their private reasons for not feeling that regard for him, which he perhaps thinks he has right to expect.”

“Why, I am sure it is next to impossible not to dislike both him and his fool of a son. Did not that fop endanger first my grandfather’s, and then your life?”

An explanation was now eagerly requested by Lady Hartley, and immediately given by her husband, in such gay terms, that she was convinced he no longer suffered any inconvenience from his fall; and he described Orlando’s dismay, upon seeing the blood flow from his cuts, in so ludicrous a style, that he made her laugh very heartily. Having thus succeeded in raising her spirits, he mentioned the arrangement he had entered into with the Orkney family, which met her entire approbation; and gave infinite pleasure to Mr. and Mrs. Cameron, who thought the society of Lady Helen and her daughter would render the Marchioness’s stay abroad much more agreeable; though she felt by no means inclined to relinquish the company of Mrs. Montgomery.

gomery. Ferdinand observed, that he wished to encrease, not to diminish their party.

Thus past the evening, nor were the five succeeding days less agreeably spent. Ferdinand devoted most of his time to his wife, driving her out when the weather permitted, and reading to her when it proved less favourable ; while Duncan went a shooting with his father, who was a keen sportsman. Their evenings were spent *en famille*, and all, more or less, regretted when it became necessary to separate.

Mr. and Mrs. Cameron, and their friend Mrs. Montgomery, agreed to accompany the Marchioness to Bath, where the young gentlemen, who had hired a Swansea skiff, to convey them to Coombe, were to join them, after spending a couple of nights at Mr. Price's. On the sixth morning, therefore, they set sail with a very favourable

wind, and in less than four hours were landed within half a mile of the house, whose owner they were going to visit.

Duncan had not chose to apprise the old gentleman of his intention, wishing, he said, to take all his friends by surprise. They had not, however, proceeded above a hundred yards, after they landed, before they were met by the landlord of a small public house, situated upon the wharf, or beach, who hoped the skiff had brought him some guests ; but he no sooner recognized Duncan, than he convinced him that he was acquainted with the wonderful alteration which had taken place in his circumstances, as he met them, hat in hand, bowing every other step, and hoping his honour's worship was well.

“ There’s a d—d canting old son of a —,” cried the polite young peer, “ formerly it would have been, ‘ Well, my master, where now, upon some of your fly tricks,

tricks, I warrant me?"—But now—why, you old hypocrite, come, give me your paw," shaking the landlord heartily by the hand. He then enquired after all his neighbours.

"There has been no great changes since your honour's departure, only your friend, Captain Barwell, had a grand rose, as he calls it, when he ~~leant~~ your honour's worship was a Lord."

"Aye, he is a hearty fellow; but how came he, and all of you to be so wise?—Daddy Price and I intended to have kept all that a secret."

"Oh, my Lord, murder will out; and why should not your friends rejoice?"

"Oh, it is all very well, if it afforded any body pleasure; but I thought that Barwell was on the point of sailing when I left Coombe."

"Lord bless your honour, his fine prospects all vanished in smoke; the ship he was to have had was purchased by a set of queer ones, who could not pay for it at

last, and so the right owners refused to stand to the bargain, and were not so much to blame neither ; however, poor Barwell was disappointed by this means, and I am afraid, at the rate he has been going on of late, the cash will soon begin to grow taper ; though, to be sure, if all he says is gospel, why he need not so much mind." Here the landlord cast an enquiring look upon Duncan, as he concluded, which meant to say, you take me, I suppose ?

" Why, what does he say ?" asked Duncan ; " you know I can be as secret as the grave, if necessary."

" I know that, your honour ; so if you won't take any notice, my Lord, for 'tis my business to live well with my neighbours, why I will tell you some of his brags ; such as that he shall soon call your Lordship cousin," and then he expects you will give him an East Indiaman at least ; nay, I don't know whether he don't talk of being an Admiral before he dies. However,

ever,

ever, it don't concern me, your Lordship knows, and God forbid I should envy my neighbours' good fortune.: But, I warrant me, the Miss Wilsons will be ready to jump out of their skins for joy, when they learn your Lordship is once more come to see them at Coombe."

Had Duncan been alone, he would have been more amused by this account of the boasting captain ; as it was, he was rather confused, as he was not only very much attached to Ferdinand, but he also stood in some awe of him, arising from the high, and indeed just opinion he had formed of his character ; he was, therefore, not inclined to ask the landlord any more questions, but bid him good day, promising to see him again, and they proceeded thro' some fields to Mr. Price's house, which they had in view ; as it commanded a very fine prospect of the sea. They had not, however, reached the extremity of the first,

D 5

when

when that gentleman presented himself at a style, out of breath, exclaiming :

“ I find my glafs did not deceive me ; I thought it was you, even in the skiff ; But the moment you landed I was almost at a certainty, and was running to see and welcome you, my dear fellow, for this is being kind, indeed.”

They shook hands most cordially over the style, which done, the old gentleman made way for them to pass, and Duncan introduced his companion to his late tutor.

“ I am truly happy to see you, my Lord Marquis, as I ever shall be any friend of my dear boy's ; you must excuse compliments, and only believe me when I assure you, you are heartily welcome ; and the longer you favour me with your company, the happier you will make me ; putting out his hand, which Ferdinand shook with no less cordiality than Duncan had done a few seconds

seconds before, and thus won the warm heart of his host, who was a very great original, but by no means deficient in point of knowledge, and had ever been particularly anxious to serve his country and his fellow creatures to the utmost of his abilities, but then it must be in his own way ; for when thwarted in any of his favourite schemes, he could be very obstinate and perverse : He had therefore retired from the world, rather in disgust, yet was still ready to serve either a friend or an enemy, at any risk, in time of need. Though he was certainly not so much beloved as he deserved, perhaps, because he had endeavoured to correct some notorious abuses, which had long existed in his neighbourhood.

His endeavours had, for a time, rendered him very popular among the lower classes, and very obnoxious to those who styled themselves gentry, who took every means

to undermine him in the opinion of his defenders : He therefore soon found, that he who trusts to popular favour, “ swims with fins of lead, and hews down oaks with rushes,” which made him determine never again to endeavour to redress the oft imaginary grievances of a tumultuous mob, and to content himself in doing all the good in his power.

Such was Griffith Price, who had just entered his sixty-fifth year, but was very hearty of his age ; short, rather inclined to corpulency, took an immoderate quantity of snuff, and generally looked rather dirty ; but a sensible man was seldom an hour in his company, before he overlooked his slovenly appearance, and felt inclined to forgive his prejudices.

He conducted his guests the nearest way to his house, which was modern built ; but it rendered less pleasant by having a well-

well stocked farm-yard, instead of a fine lawn in front, which might have been continued even to the border of the channel, at a trifling expence, and his offices, &c. would have been much better disposed of behind his mansion ; but he preferred having them in front, that he might have the continual sight of his pigs and poultry of every denomination, cows, &c. Being, as we have before observed, a sort of experimental farmer, though upon a small scale, and not fond of too much fatigue, as he observed ; he therefore meant to reduce his farm, now he had lost his right-hand, he told Lord Hartley, as they proceeded towards his mansion ; adjoining which was a most excellent garden, better stocked than any gentleman's within twenty miles, and situated in the finest aspect imaginable. . .

Thither he chose to conduct Ferdinand before they went in, wishing, he said, to shew him every thing worthy his notice
without

without doors, while they had day-light ; but the truth was, he wished to give his old house-keeper a little time, to make a few necessary preparations ; and she understood a sign he made her so well, that they had scarcely looked round a very handsome garden parlour, by which they entered, before they were requested to walk into another still larger, where a variety of dishes, both hot and cold, were set out, in a much superior style than Ferdinand had expected.

“ There, gentlemen,” said their host, “ pray fall to without ceremony ; a trip by sea generally creates an appetite. I shall make no apologies, as I do not pretend to treat either of you ; I can only say, you must make up in drinking for any deficiencies you may find in the eating way. My cellars, I know, are well stocked ; and will be answerable for my port, white and red, sherry, and Madeira, being as genuine as any ever imported. I need not praise my other liquors to you, Duncan ; but I don’t

don't suppose Lord Hartley is such an admirer of Holland's as you used to be."

"Amsterdam drops, you mean, daddy," cried Duncan, avowing his preference for gin; and then he repeated what had passed at the Castle, to the infinite amusement of the old gentleman.

Candles having been brought in before the young gentlemen had finished their meal, Mr. Price objected to Duncan's going into the village before morning.

Ferdinand gaily observed, he had already learnt the news from his old friend the landlord. The old gentleman requested an explanation, which Duncan readily gave.

"George told you truth," said the old gentleman; "Barwell really did give one of his absurd entertainments, to celebrate your birth-day. He certainly is one of the most mad-brained foolish fellows ever existing, and will, I suppose, come to the parish before

before he dies ; for what he acquires in one voyage, is sure to be spent before he goes out again ; and as he must, per force, owing to his late disappointment, lay by a season or so, I think he will be put to his shifts ere long."

" Why, I believe he made very bad out, or was very unfortunate, when he went a privateering," said Duncan, " else he certainly ought to have been worth money."

" Did you ever yet know him to tell the truth ?" asked the old man, rather peevishly. " You must know, a greater boaster than this very Barwell never existed, Marquis ; and I have many times, but hitherto in vain, endeavoured to put my honest-hearted pupil upon his guard against him. Some time ago a farmer, like myself, who married his mother's sister, bought him a small vessel to trade to and from the Levant : Well, what did this precious fellow do, but enter into an agreement with a merchant, to take out a cargo to Leghorn, where

where he got freighted to return, as he tells the story, with a variety of valuable articles, to a very large amount; these, as well as his vessel, he wrote to have insured for a very considerable sum; this done, he suffered himself to be taken upon his return home, and though, to my certain knowledge, he netted twelve hundred pounds by this rascally business (for it is a chance whether he did not leave Leghorn merely in ballast) he gave out he had lost his all, and made a few innocent traders, belonging to a neighbouring port believe, if he had but a privateer, he could redeem all his own losses, and make their fortunes by the same stroke; and positively filled their heads so much with Spanish galleons and Register ships, that they fancied they should make themselves masters of all the riches of Peru, if they gave into his scheme. A large sum of money was therefore collected, and a very fine vessel, mounting twenty-eight guns, was actually purchased, fitted

fitted out, victualled, and manned for a six months cruise, and sent out under the command of this swaggering blusterer, who is as rank a coward as ever breathed. You will therefore readily suppose that he never made much use of his guns; indeed, according to his account, he never fell in with any but neutrals: He therefore returned home at the expiration of his cruise, without having captured any thing but a fishing boat; and as he held but two shares out of the four-and-twenty, he was once more a very considerable loser; when the fact was, he, and his rascally first lieutenant, privately received considerable sums for the ransom of several of the vessels they brought to, and which they declared neutrals upon the strength of these bribes, merely to cheat their owners, of course they tried to conceal these nefarious proceedings; but suspicions arose among the crew, and the disappearance of the lieutenant, who had the money in charge, and has never been heard of

of since he landed, notwithstanding the diligent inquiries of his companion in iniquity, has put the matter beyond a doubt. Nay, Barwell, when in liquor, has frequently confessed the whole, execrating his own folly for trusting to a rather greater rascal than himself. Unfortunately, many very harmless, good sort of people were totally ruined by trusting to his courage and skill in privateering. I have never before been thus explicit, even to you, my dear Duncan, because while you resided at Coombe, you were obliged, more or less, to mix with the inhabitants, and I know you have frequently thought me cynical and morose, because I seldom or ever invited Barwell, or any of his family, to the house. You now find I had very cogent reasons for wishing to keep them at a distance, and I only hope something will even occur to prevent his again going to sea; for I know, had he obtained the vessel he intended to sail in, when you left me, he would never have

have brought her home again ; for the fellows, who wished to buy her, are as great swindlers as himself ; she would, therefore, have been cast away, or captured by the Algerines, rather than have failed in his design. And yet, I must acknowledge, the fellow can be amusing enough sometimes, but more through his absurdities than his wit ; however, he will no longer be a proper companion for you, Duncan, though, God forbid, I should encourage you to turn your back upon any one with whom you have been intimate, through pride and arrogance ; still I would not have you give this Barwell any encouragement to visit you, or to continue to style you his dear friend, for the best of all possible reasons, he is not a man of character.

“ Then shun him, my dear Duncan,” cried Ferdinand, “ as you would one infected with the plague, as the disregard he seems to have for his own character would render

render you less solicitous about your own, and by lessening your present regard for virtue, he might bring you to a level with himself, notwithstanding your present abhorrence of any deed absolutely criminal: for, according to Mr. Price's account, Captain Barwell does not care by what means he obtains that money he wastes in riot and dissoluteness."

"Very just, indeed, my Lord," replied Price; "I never encouraged any intimacy between my ward, this fellow, and his cousins, who are certainly fine shewy girls; but circumscribed as were your pleasures, I did not make those serious objections to your visiting them I perhaps ought to have done, since Barwell hints that he shall very soon be related to you, but I trust without any serious foundation; for those girls, though handsome, are very artful and designing, and, like many other folks, puzzle wiser heads than their own to fathom how they

they can afford to dress in so costly a style, and so strictly according to the reigning fashion, for they follow no *professed trade*, and their income is very trifling, yet they see a vast deal of company. However, I trust ~~they~~ they will soon sing a tune very different to the one they are now buzzing in every body's ears."

Mr. Price having ceased speaking, was requesting Lord Hartley to taste his Madeira, when the door flew open, and in hurried Captain Barwell, exclaiming, "Ah, my dear friend, I heard you were here, so set out immediately. I hope you have enjoyed your health since we parted. I did not even stop to ask a question of Mrs. Margaret, having heard your well known voice as I passed the window. How happy am I to see you! How long have you been here?—You came by water George Warrender informed me; I thought he cracked,

as

as I know you an't fond of sea voyages, and 'tis a long way round from Scotland, where I hear you have taken up your abode."

There is no knowing when the prating fellow would have stopped, if Mr. Price had not told him to shut the door, which in his great haste he had left open, and to allow the Marquis of Donalbain a short time for recollection before he overwhelmed him with such a torrent of inquiries.

"True, my good old friend, true : but my noble friend knows my way, and will, I am convinced, excuse my impatience ;" skipping back to shut the door, then seizing Duncan's hand, recommenced his questions ; but this youth, conscious his newly acquired and much admired friend was prejudiced against this boasting fellow, felt a degree of chagrin he had never before

fore experienced at being thus familiarly accosted by so despicable a character, with whom conscience forced him to acknowledge he had formed a very strict intimacy, contrary to the repeated advice of his good old tutor, whom he had hitherto thought merely actuated by prejudice in his dislike of Barwell, but whom he was now convinced had done him no more than justice. The impudent fellow took a chair, unasked by the master of the house, and continued to converse with his dear friend, as he styled Lord Donalbain, retailing all the village news, and several scandalous anecdotes respecting Miss Welder.

Duncan not wishing to appear proud, certain Barwell would ascribe any unusual degree of reserve to that source, strove to converse with his accustomed affability, but did not think proper to introduce the consequential sailor to Ferdinand, whom
Mr.

Mr. Price took care to address by his title much oftener than he had hitherto done, by way of awing the intruder into some degree of respect, not pressing him, though he could not avoid asking him to drink ; nor did Ferdinand, whom he in consequence set down for the most arrogant of all proud Peers, even address him. There was, besides, a degree of constraint visible in Duncan's manners (which he placed to his companion's account, whom he supposed was some relation sent as a sort of spy upon his actions) that communicated itself in spite of all his endeavours to hide it : he therefore soon rose to depart, and was much longer walking home than he had been coming, having seldom been more mortified, though he was convinced the cool reception he had met with greatly originated in the stranger Peer, whom he sincerely wished had staid at home, as he feared he would derange some of his well

for justice was as clear as noon-day ; instead of which it appears the noble Marquis (whom I once had the honour of calling my friend, and whom I rejoiced to hear was a man of such rank and power, knowing he deserved to be an Emperor,) has it in his power to prove you both—but I won't say what. D—n me if I don't renounce such good for-nothing relations ; and am sorry to my soul I ever stood forth in your defence, which I should never have done if I had not thought you innocent and virtuous, as I have only been exposing myself, and have perhaps lost the regard of the only man I ever sincerely valued, and all upon your account. I only hope his Lordship will please to consider how I have been imposed upon, as I dare say he would have acted by his cousins as I have endeavoured to do by you ; but I will be d—d if I have not a great mind to blow you both up. As matters stand, I only hope his Lordship will send you back again without

without a shilling to bear your expences, though they will most probably fall to my lot to pay for-you, who had not a guinea among you when you left home; and by G—d I am not so much flushed, I promise you, only I was not willing you should sink for the value of a few shiners or so; but now you may go to the bottom, and welcome, for I would not give a rope's end to save you."

This dexterous manœuvre of the Captain's highly amused Ferdinand, which Duncan perceiving, he gaily told Barwell he was happy to find he no longer considered him so very blameable; he certainly had once been a very fervent admirer of his cousin's, and had she followed his advice, they might still have remained upon a very friendly footing, but he now perceived she had merely been guided by interest. At that moment the parlour, or

more properly Mr. Crowbury's office door flew open, and in bounced a very good looking well-dressed woman, about thirty, who exclaimed, with fury in her countenance, " You did not hear that bell, I suppose, Mr. Crowbury ? how many times am I to tramp up and down, and to break the bell wires upon your account ? One of your best clients has been waiting this half hour and more, while you are settling disputes with a pack of whores and rogues ! I have been listening, I have, you old fool ! but was not taken in with your my Lord this, and my Lord t'other. What great men ever employ you, answer me that ? but you are at your old tricks again. Well, mark my words, they will bring you to the gallows, or Botany Bay ; please God it may be the first : but, come along, you good-for-nothing old dog ! do, and see me righted ; yonder is an impudent creature, no better than these fine dressy things you
are

are among, who is talking of clawing my eyes out ; but, please God, I will rid my house of her and of all those painted stum-pets upon whom you waste your time. Things are come to a fine pass, truly ; if I was not to pluck up a spirit now and then, we should not have a morsel of bread soon to put in our mouths !”

As this was not the first salute of the kind Mr. Crowbury had received from his gentle helpmate, and as he was perhaps more provoked than he had ever been before, conscious he had people of the first rank and consequence in his office, which certainly did not often happen, he started from his seat, seized the virago by the two shoulders, and forced her out of the room ; swearing by the God that made him, if she dared to shew her face again, he would break every bone in her skin, at the risk of being hanged at the next Old Bailey Sessions.

Having closed the door, he made a thousand excuses to the diverted gentlemen ; adding, “ You perceive, my Lords, the blessed fruits of a man’s marrying his mistress. That devil of mine was all complaisance while she remained my housekeeper ; but I, like many others, played the fool by way of preserving her reputation, forsooth : for she persuaded me she was in a thriving condition, and so I have given her a legal right to torment me in this manner, for she laughed at me the moment the knot was tied, and has plagued me out of my life ever since ; but she has lately carried her insolence to such a pitch, that one or the other of us must take the outside of the house ; and as she brought me no fortune, I mean very soon to let her try how she can live upon twenty or thirty pounds* a-year, instead of having hundreds at command. The person she came to complain about is her own sister, who would very likely act as she does, if she

she

she had the same power. I should not have entered into all these unnecessary details, if I had not wished to convince your Lordships no affront was intended on my part ; and I can assure you, should you at any future time honour me with your commands, Mrs. Crowbury shall neither listen nor intrude upon our privacy."

Perhaps nothing could have been more *mal-à-propos* for the Miss Wilsons than the foregoing scene, as nothing could have placed in a stronger light the folly of any man's marrying his mistress. They were, in fact, so much disconcerted, they thought it most prudent to quit the field, therefore rose to depart ; Marianne, in a faint voice, requesting her cousin would settle with Mr. Crowbury, and she would see him repaid.

"We must not part thus, Marianne," cried Duncan, also rising; "I only hope you are convinced I am not so much to

blame, as you have tried to make the world believe ; but will you favour me with a few minutes private conversations ; as I have something to propose I don't wish even those who it seems are in all your secrets to hear ?”

“ I can't imagine what your Lordship can have to say to me, that I ought to listen to after treating me as you have done.”

“ Well, well, never mind,” replied Duncan ; “ I know, my dear girl, you are of a forgiving temper, so step into the passage for two minutes, and I will allow you to abuse me there as much as you please. Come, come, you must oblige me this once.”

She suffered him to lead her out : Mr. Crowbury begged leave to show them into another room : Duncan desired he would remember his lady was very particular ; if she dared to give the slightest interruption, he

he would twist her neck round, as he hoped to be saved. In a very few minutes Duncan and Marianne came to a friendly understanding, as she declared the Captain and her sister had spirited her up to act as she had done, for she had foreseen his Lordship would never make her his wife, though his desertion would cost her her life. She was, however, easily prevailed upon to accept fifty pounds to bear her expences, and a like sum annually during her life-time, as Duncan told her he would employ Mr. Crowbury to purchase her such an annuity, and desired her to apply to him without scruple, should she ever meet with any pecuniary difficulties.

Having thus settled matters they returned to the company, Duncan saying Miss Marianne was to call upon Mr. Crowbury before he left London for some papers he had promised to leave with him, to be given her; adding, he should pay that gentleman's

gentleman's bill up to the present time. The Captain only hoped his Lordship was convinced he had been absolutely and purposely misled.

“Why, to tell you the truth,” was the reply, “I thought at Coombe, and am now convinced, you have been the instigator of Marianne's pretended claims. This is not the first time you have built castles in the air, which have vanished speedily after; so in future let me advise you to mind your own business. Your having threatened to expose your cousins, and having treated them as you have done before this company, has hurt you very much, in my opinion, for I know they have acted by your advice; but if ever you dare to say any thing you know not to be strictly true, either concerning me or Marianne, you shall find me a worse enemy than ever I have been a good friend; for seeing both I and her may have been
to

honour. The first house they came to was the habitation of the village cabinet-maker, joiner, carpenter, and undertaker; at the door of which stood a stout good looking woman, who, in seeing them approach, called out, "So, so, what is this the happy day? Why, how devilish fly you have been about it? Why had not you both gone the back way, and so have met at church?"

"Because, Mrs. Jane," replied Duncan, "my conduct henceforward must be so well regulated, I shall in time be able to set scandal at defiance. But how are you? and how is my good old friend?"

"What did you want him to act as father, my Lord?--Why, I half expected myself to have been bridemaids."

"Then you will be equally disappointed, so one cannot laugh at the other."

"Well, well, joking apart, I am heartily glad to see you, my Lord; you have known me before to-day, and if I can't promote fun, I scorn to make mischief."

The Miss Wilsons had never been very partial to this joking lady, and now evinced their disapprobation of her fun by walking forward, but thought must prudent to slacken their pace, as Duncan stopped to enquire after Mr. Lettsom, which Marianne thought much too condescending, wondering, when he joined her again, how he could stop to talk to such a low vulgar woman.

“Nay, nay, Marianne, you have been glad to address her before now; many a favour has she conferred upon us both, and I shall ever remember her past kindness with gratitude, and was pleased more by her blunt address than had she tried to make fine speeches. She is a worthy honest creature, and does her duty to the best of her knowledge, merely judging herself upon her skill in pickling and preserving, so never affect to despise real worth in any station.”

Ferdinand

Ferdinand was pleased with his spirit, and the young lady was effectually silenced: they therefore proceeded without speaking across a green in the center of the village, where they were seen by the Captain, who had observed them coming, and was now all condescension and humility, hardly daring to express his hopes that the two noblemen would honour his mother's cottage with their presence.

“Hey-day!” cried Duncan, “why, from what quarter does the wind blow now, Jem? I certainly meant to call upon my old mother, I suppose she is at home?”

“She very seldom goes out, your Lordship knows, and certainly would not upon any account have absented herself while she had the most distant reason to expect a visit from your Lordship.”

“Well done, Captain, this is flummery with a vengeance; 'tis my belief you have been taking a few lessons of an uncle of mine, a great courtier, and you had better

leave compliments to him, and content yourself with sincerity, which is always current coin: but how are your cellars stocked?"

"Not so well as I could wish; indeed we nearly emptied them again, when I celebrated your Lordship's birth-day, which we learnt from the newspapers was kept in style at Orkney Castle."

They now entered so mean a house, Ferdinand thought this blustering fellow's habitation did not at all accord with his consequential airs and behaviour. In a low dark dismal sort of kitchen, very badly furnished, hung round with dried fish, and decorated with a parcel of trumpery shells, stood the most forbidding old woman any author ever attempted to describe. She was very stout, large featured, very much marked with the small-pox, which had also deprived her of one of her eyes, and totally robbed the other of any pretensions to beauty; between sixty and seventy, and
very

WHICH IS THE MAN?

very active, but exceedingly dirty, and besmeared with snuff. Her voice was particularly gruff, and her manners were even less prepossessing than her figure. Such was Mrs. Barwell, who, rising out of a large wicker chair, said, "I give you joy of your good fortune, young man. My son tells me you are a Lord; God give you grace to be a good one, and to make a good use of the mint of money he says you will have to spend."

"Do hold your bother, mother," cried the angry Captain, "and try to shew some respect to these noble Lords."

"Why, sure a body may speak," retorted the incorrigible matron. "I hope my Lord will never forget his old friends."

"Never fear, mother, I will not die in your debt, having often assisted to empty cellars and cupboards, and frequently tormented you to death; nay, made you send your soul to the devil, as you have not scrupled to tell me; so now, as you justly observe,

WHICH IS THE MAN ?

observe, I ought to pay off a few of my old scores ; therefore, depend upon it, you shall never want a tumbler of gin twist, which I know you love to your heart ; so henceforward I will take upon me to supply you with your favourite liquor, and if your stock should ever chance to run low, only jog Daddy Price's memory, and he will take care to send in a fresh supply of those said juniper drops."

Ferdinand smiled at the polite manner in which this promise was made, and was even tempted to laugh when the old woman swore by G— he was a hearty fellow, which she had always thought, and now she was convinced, wishing him long life, and a large family of children to enjoy his riches after him, looking at her niece while speaking, who affected to blush, and the sisters actually turned their heads. Ferdinand, rather anxious to put a conclusion to their pantomime, gave Duncan a hint

Mr.

Mr. Price expected them to walk over his improvements. The latter perfectly understood his meaning, but found it no such easy matter to shake off Marianne, who even whispered a request to speak with him in private : he therefore accompanied her into the old woman's garden, while the Captain displayed his curiosities to Lord Hartley, who absolutely refused taking any refreshment, and was very happy when Duncan returned, and began to take leave, having equally refused to taste either the contents of the larder or cellar, and was at last suffered to depart ; the mother, son, and nieces all attributing his not chusing to eat or drink in the house to the pride of his friend, whom the Captain supposed would scorn to sit down in a cottage, when, to their great astonishment, they perceived the friends walking towards the cobbler's.

They would not stay long there the Captain foresaw, nor could he help blaming his
friend

friend for taking a man of consequence to see Simpson.

Lord Hartley would suppose the low fellow was an associate of theirs, the Miss Wylsons feared.—The Captain would watch their coming out to undeceive him: meanwhile the young men walked down the cobbler's garden, and entered his small but neat cot.

He was mending a pair of shoes; and though he had seen them coming, continued his work for several seconds after they were within the house; though he called out the moment the door opened—"What, my hearty, I am glad to see you!"

"But, z—ds, man, you don't see me," was the reply.

"But I have done so, and shall again, please God; for this is the last stitch," which having finished, he flung down the shoe and tool, and rising, took his scholar by the
the

the hand, which he shook very heartily, and then led the way into an inner room, where there was a very good fire, and every thing proclaimed the neatness and industry of the mansion.

“ Pray walk in, Sir,” he went on, looking at Ferdinand ; “ and do me the favour to sit down.”

“ That gentleman is a sprig of nobility, as well as myself, Master Simpson,” said Duncan ;—“ the Marquis of Hartley, who does me the honour to call me friend.”

“ The Marquis of Hartley !” cried Simpson, looking earnestly at the animated handsome countenance of his guest ; “ then my cottage is really honoured ; for I have long both admired, revered, and respected your Lordship, as one of the first orators Great Britain ever produced ; though, I can suppose, to hear yourself thus addressed by a village cobbler, reminds you of our immortal bard :

I saw

‘ I saw a smith stand with his hammer, that
 The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,
 With open mouth, swallowing a tailor’s new
 Who, with his shears and measure in his hand,
 Standing on slippers, which his nimble hands
 Had falsely thrust upon contrary feet,
 Told of a thousand warlike French,
 That were embattled, and ranked in Kent,
 Another lean, unwashed cobbler,
 Cuts of his tale,—and talks of Mantley’s speech

“ Who was never more flattered,” re-
 plied the really pleased Ferdinand, “ and
 who is perfectly conscious how to treat you
 in your own way—”

‘ Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
 The dark unfathom’d caves of ocean bear,
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness in the desert air

“ Your Lordship’s allusion will make me
 vain ; for ’tis your fate, as Gray justly says,

‘ The applause of listening Senates to command,
 While you read triumph in a nation’s eyes.’

“ But

“ But now, to have done with quotation, let me request, my Lord Marquis, you would be seated, if you can favour me with your company for a few minutes.”

“ I positively came to Coombe purposely to speak to Mr. Price and yourself, and, you must therefore place my interest solely to the account of Lord Down, who was once your scholar, I understand.”

“ I endeavoured to give him a little insight into accounts, my Lord ; but I can’t say of his application : He knows I never flung a clean napkin over a small table, and placing a plate, containing several pieces of very nice seed-cake before his guests, saying, “ My scholar always thought Nancy succeeded in these cakes even better than Mrs. Margaret, Mr. Price’s house-keeper ; I am therefore very glad she happened to have one in the house ; so don’t fancy I mean to flint you, gentlemen, as there is more in the beaufet ; only Nancy chose

chose to cut that ready, by way of displaying her best china plate, which, ten to one, I should not have sought after, in case you called before she returned ; not doubting, you find, you would do us that honour, while in the neighbourhood."

" Or else I should have deserved to be hanged, drawn, and quartered," replied Duncan. " This fortunate fellow, Marquis, has got one of the neatest little women for a wife, and one of the best cooks that ever fell to the share of any mortal ; and I assure you, you will relish this cake ; for, I need not tell you, since you have got the use of your eyes, you may eat off the floor in this house."

" I require no persuasion to tempt me to taste what would positively give me an appetite, if mine failed me."

Never had honest Simpson been more gratified : He had no wine ; but soon placed a jug of excellent home-brewed upon the
table,

table, a bottle of brandy, a decanter of water and sugar, and then very cordially sat down to partake of the repast; requesting the gentlemen would help themselves to what they preferred ; and, to the infinite astonishment of Ferdinand, repeated the principal heads of several of his most celebrated speeches, upon which he commented with a degree of facility and knowledge, as wonderful as it was uncommon ; as he had merely the benefit of a country-school education, and was therefore not versed in the learned languages, but was perfectly master of his own ; wrote a beautiful hand, and was one of the readiest accountants Lord Hartley had ever met with, who could not help acknowledging, that if this surprising genius had had those advantages in point of masters, &c. which fall to the lot of men of fashion in general, he would have distanced all his contemporaries in the pursuit of fame ; as, upon almost every subject, he was equally conversant.

Talking

Talking of history, he said the love of it was inseparable from human nature, because it was inseparable from self-love ; as most people imagine things which affect them must affect posterity. This was a sentiment, he believed, which ran through mankind, from Cæsar down to the parish clerk, or even the village cobbler—“ *ecce signum*”.—

“ To go no farther,” continued Simpson, “ the Triumphs of Odin were celebrated in rustic songs, and the feats of our British ancestors were recorded in those of their bards. The savages of America have the same custom at this day, as long historical ballads of their hunting and wars are sung at all their festivals.”

With what was properly called *Belles Lettres*, he acknowledged himself least acquainted ; but argued with such propriety upon the subjects he had studied, that Lord Hartley rose to depart with reluctance, promising, should he at any future period re-
visit

visit Coombe, never to pass the hospitable cottage of this truly wonderful man, who seemed to lead so comfortable a life, that he felt more inclined to envy than commiserate his situation.

From Duncan he learnt that he never entered a public house, nor ever scarcely drank any thing stronger than Nancy's home-brewed, which was merely good table beer. Although he smoked his pipe every evening, yet he never tasted his favourite cake, or drank a drop of brandy, except he had a friend he wished to regale—then he was generous to a degree. As they had no family, he contrived to save money apace, which his sagacity and prudence had placed in permanent security for his future advantage. Such was the cobbler of Coombe, as drawn from nature, and we lament there are not more of his stamp and character.

Duncan,

Duncan, desirous of making him and his worthy wife some trifling return for their particular kindness towards him, consulted his friend as to what present he should make them, observing, he was such a queer fellow, if he thought he sent him any thing, because he wanted it, or could not afford to purchase it, he would, ten to one, feel himself affronted.

“ But grand dad gave me plenty of money, desiring me to be generous, but not extravagant. As for old mother Barwell, I shall send her twenty gallons of the best Holland’s, to be renewed as occasion requires. So, do advise me, Lord Hartley, what to send Simpson.”

“ Upon my word I hardly know what would be of most use to him. Suppose you send him a handsome silver tankard, and Nancy, a handsome gown, and some lace for a cap; you can easily send them all from Bath.”

“ These

“ These will be the very things,” cried Duncan; “ here I have been puzzling my brains all to no purpose, and you hit upon what was proper in a moment!”

“ You will not need my advice what to send Marianne, I suppose?” gaily asked Ferdinand: “ is her’s to be a token of love or friendship? What think you of an enamelled dog, with ‘ faithful till death’ upon his collar?”

“ Now you are only laughing at me, Marquis; but I positively am rather deep in her debt. But do you really think her handsome? I wish to have your sincere opinion of my taste; I mean in point of women.”

“ Then I certainly have seen many much handsomer women than Marianne Wilson, Lady Hartley for example,

whose serious charms awe the breast her beauty
warms;

Then, again, your lovely cousin, whose
VOL. II. F sparkling

sparkling blue eyes beam with wit, tempered by innocence, while a sort of arch *naïveté* gives every moment fresh graces to her beautiful countenance. Having seen Elinor Melrose, can you pay her so poor a compliment, as to give the preference to Marianne Willson, who I will allow to be a fine shewy girl, and that is all I can say in her favour?"

"Why, I must own she falls very short of Lady Hartley; and to be sure Elinor is a lighter figure."

"Where did you ever see so elegant a creature as your cousin, particularly when she dances? and when she speaks out it is the triumph of simplicity." Lady Hartley's beauty is of a different character; they might be compared to Juno and Hebe, or perhaps the former might still more aptly be compared to the Goddess of Wisdom."

"Why, she is certainly very clever, too much so for me. I must have a woman with

with less knowledge, for I should not like to be laughed at or tutored by my wife; however I must call upon the Wilsons this evening. Marianne asked it as a great favour, and I would not deny her, as 'tis most probably the last time we shall ever meet."

"If you have really formed to excellent a resolution, I think you are very right to oblige the lady. I only hope she won't request to accompany you abroad."

"Why, lookye, my good friend, take my word for it, she will never bear the title of Marchioness of Donalbain; and I don't suppose my aunt and cousin, not to mention your wife, would allow me to take her in my suite in any other capacity, were she so inclined; and I really can't suppose she would favour me with her company upon such terms."

"I dare say you have formed a very proper judgment of her character, and if she is a woman of sense, she will neither

aspire to the title of your wife, nor degrade herself by accepting that of your mistress, though she probably did once entertain a hope of shining as Mrs. Price."

"Then she deceived herself, you may believe me, for I had reasons—but no matter: yet I positively like her, and have been over head and ears in love with her: but that is between our two selves. I know Diddy Price will be angry at my going this evening, but I really cannot leave the place without paying them a visit; so pray, my dear friend, endeavour to keep him in good temper during my absence, for I love him a devilish deal better than I like Marianne."

"I am very glad to hear it; but, hush, he comes."

The old gentleman, having been looking out for them, now approached. Duncan told him where they had been, who they had met, and how they had been treated.

—as

“Was not your Lordship highly flattered,” he asked Lord Hutley, “in being introduced to so elegant a set of people?”

“I was introduced to but one person, my dear Sir; and with him and yourself I wish very much to renew my acquaintance. I need not add, I am speaking of Simpson, who is certainly, without exception, the most extraordinary character I ever conversed with.”

“Your Lordship is very right, and I am convinced you have left him not less prepossessed in your favour.”

Duncan mentioned the presents he intended to make him and his wife. “I approve of your intention,” he replied; “but I am fearful the tankard will be a heavy tax upon the worthy man, he will be so fond of filling it to your health.”

“Then do you contrive, my dear tutor, to send him, in my name, a sack of malt every quarter, that he may the better be

enabled to display his plate. I think he can't be offended by so trifling a mark of my continued regard."

The old gentleman promised to comply with his wishes. Having reached his house, they sat down to a most excellent dinner, chiefly the produce of the farm, which was all excellent of its kind, and exceedingly well dressed. About seven, having given his friend a look, Duncan stole off very quietly, and did not return till after nine. During his absence the discourse had chiefly turned upon him. The infantine sports of his earliest youth were still fresh in the recollection of this faithful guardian; and he dwelt with the minutest detail on every action that occurred in his progress from juvenility to manhood. The village frolics he had shared in, and the rural diversions in which he had been engaged, were artlessly recapitulated to Hartley, who instead of being sated with the garru-
lity

lity of age, listened with eager attention to every syllable that escaped his lips; satisfied that the communication flowed from a heart feelingly alive to the best interests of his late pupil.

Price also recited many very generous traits in Duncan's character, which had come to his own knowledge, and assured the Marquis he had taken some pains to render him rather more a man of the world; but there was a great difference between theory and practice: however, he could be answerable for his principles; nay, perhaps his sincerity rendered his manners the less polite, but he seldom spoke without meaning, and never made a promise he did not intend to fulfil, he therefore thought he bid fair to become a very superior character.

He then entered into various details respecting the Wilsons; acknowledging he had been rather disturbed by some reports

which had come to his ears since the Marquis's departure, but which he trusted were merely spread by Barwell to increase his own consequence, though he should not be sorry when the connection was totally broken off; notwithstanding he was convinced his pupil would not be easily drawn in, and he knew him to be very resolute when put upon his mettle.

Duncan returned in rather a bad temper both gentlemen perceived. He made excuses for his long absence, which were very readily accepted, Mr. Price not being sorry, he had afforded him an opportunity of conversing with Lord Hartley, whose advice he foresaw would have infinite weight with his quondam pupil, whom he now began to rally; declaring his fears that Marianne had proved unkind, and must ascribe his dejection to his having bid her a final adieu. Duncan endeavoured to laugh it off; but acknowledged he never meant

meant to visit her again, though he entered into no details respecting what had passed ; and the following morning they took leave of their host, who hoped to see them again when they returned. They readily promised to comply with his wishes.

While the chaise was in waiting, a lad, who had been for some time upon the watch, slipped a note into Duncan's hand when he came out, but not so dexterously but he was perceived by the other gentlemen, who laughed at the transaction ; Ferdinand observing it was very ungallant to consign it to the pocket unread, as it might require an immediate answer. Then the writer must have patience, he replied, as he certainly should neither read nor answer it till he reached Bath, his countenance denoting as strongly as the over-night that something had occurred to ruffle his temper, in which the Wiltons were concerned ; but as he did not chuse to enter into any

F 5 explanation.

explanation, his friends took no farther notice, and Ferdinand and himself, stepping into the post-chaise, were soon on the road to Bath, Duncan directing the postilions to take some bye lanes to avoid going through the village ; that he might avoid seeing Barwell was his ostensible reason, and Ferdinand made no comments upon his orders.

CHAPTER XXII.

IT was late before they reached the York house at Bath, where the Marchioness, Mr. and Mrs. Cameron, and Mrs. Montgomery, had arrived to dinner. The former's eyes glistened with delight when Ferdinand entered. As they had made it so late, she began to fear some accident might have befallen them, notwithstanding her ill health, and absolute want, of whom there were moments when even Duncan thought the Marchioness uncommonly handsome : indeed her countenance never looked so peculiarly interesting, as when she either met or parted from her handsome husband,

who, though particularly attentive to her when in her company, frequently even anticipating her wishes, was evidently not so much in love with her as she was with him; for she had eyes for no other object when he was present, listened to no one else with the same pleasure, and was wholly dispirited when he was absent, appearing merely to exist in his sight, and to live upon his smiles. She enquired so minutely respecting the females he had seen at Coombe, Duncan could not help thinking she was rather of a jealous disposition, which had very probably either brought on or greatly increased her illness, and appeared particularly to affect her spirits; yet he could not believe his friend had ever given any substantial cause, though he did not doubt his being very generally admired by the fair sex; he therefore thought she was more to be blamed than pitied if she suffered a mere chimera to disturb her felicity, particularly as she certainly pos-
sessed

possessed a very superior understanding, therefore ought to have been superior to those little weaknesses of human nature.

Such were Duncan's reflections when he devoted his mind to any serious object, which was not often, as he rather wished to banish those unpleasant thoughts which too frequently intruded themselves upon his mind. The party spent three days at Bath, during which time the Coombe presents were purchased and dispatched. Lord Hartley adding to the tankard a ~~complete~~ collection of the British Classics, and the best system of Natural History then extant, to which he subjoined a short letter, which was far more gratifying to Simpson's feelings than his costly present; nor was the worthy Price forgot by either his pupil or late guest; as, though the Duke of Orkney, considering his elevated rank, was far from rich, his notions were in many respects princely, and having lived to clear his estates,

estates, he now wished his heir to support his rank with proper dignity: he had therefore desired him to lay out five hundred pounds in whatever manner he thought most likely to please his good tutor, and Duncan had very judiciously appropriated four hundred and seventy pounds of the money to the purchase of a field of seven acres, which had long been an object of envy to the good man, as it lay contiguous to his house, but happened to be the property of a nobleman, who could not sell any of his paternal estate.

Lord Hartley had however suggested, upon his friend's mentioning this circumstance, and his own wishes that this nobleman might possibly have no objection to make an exchange for another field of equal size and value, and understanding he was then at Bath, offered to wait upon him to propose the matter. Suffice it to say, he succeeded to his utmost wishes. His Lordship's

Ship's steward having pointed out a piece of land his Lordship had intended to purchase, the business was soon settled, and the title deeds of the long envied field were sent to the good old man, with a very handsome piece of ornamental plate, as a sort of additional remembrance; and by way of stocking his new acquisition, Lord Hartley sent him several remarkable fine head of cattle bred upon his Lancashire estate, as he, ~~like~~ the Duke of Orkney, paid great attention to every thing he thought likely to conduce to the general prosperity of the kingdom. Mrs. Margaret was also remembered, but no mention was made of the Wilsons. Ferdinand therefore supposed, if Duncan was inclined to make them any present, he did not chuse even he should know in what he meant it to consist.

Having finished all their business at Bath, and given Duncan a very cursory view of its elegant

elegant buildings and pleasing environs, after taking a most affectionate leave of the truly amiable Mr. and Mrs. Cameron, the two Peers, Lady Hartley, and Mrs. Montgomery, who was already a great favourite of Duncan's, set out for London, which they reached on the second day to a seven o'clock dinner. The late Marquis of Hartley's house in Grosvenor-square had, immediately after his death, been entirely new furnished in the most elegant and expensive manner by the excellent Mr. Hanson, for the better accommodation of the new married couple, of whom he was dotingly fond, and upon whom he continually lavished the most noble presents, glorying in his grandson, who was generally the theme of his conversation when among his friends, who knew the most direct way to his heart was to express their approbation of Lord Hartley's political principles and avowed patriotism.

At

At Hartley House both Ferdinand and Duncan found letters from the Duke of Orkney, who hoped to join them in London within three days after they came to hand. The Marchioness expressed great impatience to be introduced to Lady Helen and her lovely daughter; and Mrs. Montgomery expressed her partiality for Scotch ladies in general, who possessed a vivacity peculiar to their nation. "And when the vivacity of their natural spirit is tempered with sound judgment, they are almost irresistible," said Ferdinand.--"Such was, nay, Mr. Ausby would doubtless say, "still is Lady Helen; while her lovely daughter, to all the charms of beauty, and the utmost elegance of external form, adds an innocent simplicity, a sort of *naïveté* I seldom have seen equalled; therefore don't you wonder, my love," turning to his wife, "that our friend here has not commenced her admirer? I have been endeavouring to make him sensible of her beauty and accomplish-

compliments, as I think they would be a very happy couple, and am convinced the Duke of Oikney wishes to promote the match."

The conclusion of his Lordship's speech reconciled his wife to its beginning, which had given her a pang she with difficulty concealed; but now rallied Duncan with infinite success upon his want of taste. The evening was therefore spent very agreeably; and every moment the Marquis could spare was devoted the two following days to shew his guest whatever was most worthy notice in the capital.

Lord David and Mr. Cameron having made a sort of visiting journey back to London, that is, called at every house within ten miles of their road, with whose master or mistress they could claim the slightest acquaintance, did not reach town till the evening after the Hartley party; and

and during an early visit his Lordship paid a great man in office the following morning, (whom he adroitly sounded respecting the young orator,) found the Marquis stood so high in the opinion of Ministry, he foresaw the most brilliant honours awaited him, as a star and garter was the only lumina which could be held out for such a man, and that he discovered was not intended to be withheld.

His Lordship, in addition to his own talents, having several boroughs at his command, in short, what is termed very great parliamentary interest, and as he evidently leaned most towards Ministry, they entertained great hopes he would soon become a decided supporter of their measures. Such a man was therefore the very patron for the young Orlando, as it was evident he had only to ask a favor to have it granted. His Lordship therefore hastened to the hotel, where he had taken apartments, to give

give his son fresh instructions previous to their visiting Grosvenor Square, which they did that very morning, and felt their respect greatly increase for the owner of the splendid mansion; they beheld Ferdinand gave them a very polite reception, and requested, if they were disengaged, which, considering the emptiness of the town, he thought not impossible, they would take a family dinner with him, when he would introduce them to the Marchioness, who was taking her accustomed morning airing. So kind an invitation was very readily accepted, and at the time appointed the father and son once more made their appearance in the square. Duncan was out with the Marchioness when they called in the morning, but endeavoured, in imitation of his friend, to express something like satisfaction at seeing his uncle and cousin; observing to the latter, the London hours were still later than those he had found such with in Scotland, as it was then

near seven o'clock. "But these have the recommendation of fashion to make them pass current," replied Mr. Cameron. "Now, my grandfather's three o'clock dinners were neither early enough to render them pleasant, or late enough to distinguish him from the *canaille*. But, pray, since we are upon the subject, how do the fashionable hours agree with you?"

"Why, as I always make a very good meal between two and three, I don't find they derange my stomach. Besides, it is an English not a foreign custom my friend tells me."

"I hope, Marquis, you are perfectly sensible of the infinite advantage you will derive from being permitted to style Lord Hartley your friend, as it is a favour neither your title nor money could procure you."

"That is very true, ~~uncle~~, for I dare say my good friend would ~~have liked~~ me just as well had I remained ~~Dennis Price~~, Price,

but I am truly sensible of his kindness, and since my birth has procured me such a friend, I am very glad I was born superior to the *kennel*, as you call us folks."

"Oh, pray cousin, don't attempt to quote French till you have studied the language. *A-propos*, are you to be presented before you leave England?"

"You have probably forgot that the Royal family are at Weymouth," observed Lord Hartley; "besides, I understand the Duke of Orkney does not intend Lord Donalbain should be presented at Versailles, he may therefore, with the utmost propriety, defer visiting St. James's till his return."

Mr. Cameron was silenced till the ladies appeared, to whom he paid the most obsequious compliments, without obtaining even a smile of approbation from the Marchioness in return, though he had, in other respects, no reason to complain of her want of politeness.

Lord

Lord David was no less profuse in hyperbolic expressions of respect and admiration for every member of the Hartley family, even noticing a very handsome white terrier of his Lordship's, who was allowed free egress into the saloon. His visible endeavours to arrest the favour of every individual, did not escape the notice of Duncan, who leaving the eating-room soon after the cloth was removed, presently returned with a large Persian cat, which, he observed, ought to come in for her share of compliments, being also an inhabitant of Hartley House, and a great favourite with every body.

These vulgar hints were peculiarly distressing, as Lord David found it impossible either to foresee, or prevent them : affected laughter at his nephew's originality was his only resource ; when, to his infinite relief, a note was brought Lord Hartley from Mr. Ausby, informing him, the ~~Clay~~ family

family had arrived at an hotel in Albemarle-street about an hour before, where his Grace, being too fatigued to venture out, hoped to see his Lordship and his grandson, as soon as they could make it convenient ; concluding with a polite message from the ladies to the Marchioness, expressive of their impatience to be introduced to her.

Lord David, even before he allowed the Marquis to speak, declared his intention of immediately inquiring after his father's health.

“ Then, what say you, Donalbain ? ” asked Ferdinand, “ suppose you accompany your uncle and cousin into Albemarle-street, by way of announcing mine and Lady Hartley's visit, whose looks tell me she is as impatient to see your aunt and Miss Melrofs, as they can be to see her ; but remember though, I would not have you consider your time wholly at your own, or
his

his Grace's disposal, you continue my guest while I remain in town."

"I shall need no pressing to accept so kind an invitation; so let us be jogging, uncle."

Lord David's carriage was waiting, they therefore set out immediately, leaving Ferdinand and his wife to follow at leisure, who wished to allow them a short time to talk over family affairs before he joined them. As soon as they were gone, Mr. Montgomery remarked, that Lord David appeared an excellent courtier.

"I can't agree with you," said Lady Hartley, "for I don't think Nature designed he should excel in any thing; for he cannot even use art with effect, so as to appear sincere; and I do not think his morals are proof either against his avarice or his ambition: then, even where he most intends to please, he has a very inelegant flow

of words, and generally speaks without reasoning, matter or method ; in short, he does not appear to me to possess any amiable qualities, though he may be absolutely free from vicious or criminal ones ; but he is much below shining, and hardly a degree above contempt in any character. Do I judge him so severely, Ferdinand ?”

“ I can say I think you do, my dear ; as from what little I have seen of him, I really take him to be a stranger to manly friendship or gratitude, and consider him deaf to the voice of honour, blinded by self-interest to the allurements of glory ; in a word, wholly destitute of every active virtue ; for being himself unprincipled, he believes mankind are equally false, perfidious, and interested, therefore appears to practise dissimulation for his own convenience : besides, he is ridiculously attached to foreign manners ; indeed, he appears truly to have adopted the Italian character, being

Tho' poor, luxurious ; though submissive, vain :
Tho' grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet untrue,
And e'en in penance planning sins anew.

“ Nay, it is most probable, at this very moment criticising us with as much asperity as we are retaliating ; with this difference, he courted our favour, we contemned his ; as his near relation to the Duke of Orkney, is his only recommendation to my notice.—But it grows late ;—his Grace will wish to retire after his journey, we will therefore hasten into Albemarle-street.”

Mrs. Montgomery requested to be left at home ; Ferdinand and Lady Hartley, therefore, went by themselves, and were received with almost open arms, by the whole party ; who were all more or less flattered by this early visit from the Marchioness. With scrutinising eyes Lady Hartley regarded the beautiful Elinor, of whom she was, she scarcely knew why, involuntarily

voluntarily jealous, Ferdinand ever mentioning her in such terms of approbation : nor was she surprised when she had seen the lovely Scotch lassie ; who, superior to affectation, did not pretend to feel fatigue, but was in her accustomed high spirits ; and the appearance of the man, who, though wedded, still remained unrivalled in her good graces, gave more than usual animation to her handsome features ; for she still thought him beauty as young Adonis when he stole away the heart of Venus—and we must acknowledge she was not singular in her opinion of our hero, whose courage and heroic worth lightened from his eye, while his manly brown cheek, tinged with red, glowed with warmth and health.

A very short time sufficed to render the ladies intimate. Lord David had been holding forth, from the moment he entered, upon the very superior elegance of Hartley House, and now returned the subject.

“ Then,

“ Then, I presume, you are inclined to allow, that the English understand furnishing houses as well as the Italians,” said the Duke.

“ Undoubtedly, Sir ; and I think, when you have seen the hospitable mansion I have been vainly attempting to describe, you will acknowledge taste is required, as well as money, to produce so elegant a suite of apartments.”

“ Then I hope your Lordship will recommend Seddon to your friends,” rejoined Ferdinand, “ for his taste, and my worthy grandfather’s money, worked the miracles you so kindly celebrate. I only hope you have inspired his Grace with sufficient curiosity to induce him to dine in Grosvenor-square to-morrow. Lady Hartley, pray use your influence with the ladies.”

The invitation was readily accepted, and soon after, Ferdinand, his friend Duncan, and the Marchioness, took their leave.—

When returned for the night, the discourse between Lord and Lady Hartley naturally turned upon the Orkney family, her Ladyship bestowing great praises upon Lady Helen and her daughter.

Ferdinand was happy she approved of them as companions, observing, the latter was more calculated to inspire love than admiration, though she had “ *assez d’esprit pour être aimable, sans en avoir assez pour être insupportable.*”

Accustomed to speak the real feelings of his heart, Ferdinand had obeyed its impulse, without reflecting that what he had uttered might by his wife be deemed a satire upon herself. It had, however, a very different effect upon the superior mind of his wife, who was convinced he meant no allusion, and for the first time in her life, thought her sex ought to endeavour to obtain the love, instead of the admiration of
the

the other. The reflection that she had hitherto been playing not only with her own, but her husband's happiness, for the first time came across her, and was followed by a violent flood of tears. Quick as thought the comprehensive mind of Ferdinand taught him what had occasioned her affliction ; thinking it, however, wisest to dissimble, he, in the most soothing and affectionate terms, enquired the cause of her sorrow—what had he said or done to thus distress her ?

“ Nothing, my beloved Ferdinand,” was her reply ; “ you have ever been too kind, too indulgent to all my foibles : excuse my present weakness, and suffer it to pass unnoticed.”

He said no more, though he severely blamed himself for his heedlessness, and more than ever resolved to treat Elinor with proper reserve.

CHAP. XXIII

LADY Helen, but particularly Philip was very impatient to hear her father-in-law's real opinion of Lady Mordaunt, and whether he thought she and the Marquis were a happy couple. As soon, therefore, as they had taken their leave, she adroitly asked her uncle David his opinion, by way of leading Ausby to give his.

The Envoy declared her, in every respect, faultless. The Duke agreed with him, as far as regarded her figure, but thought the pensive air of melancholy which clouded her countenance, rather diminished her attractions.—“Pray, what is your opinion, Charles?”

“I am

“ I am convinced she possesses very great qualities, and a very extensive capacity, and I think her capable of speaking and writing with equal ease and dignity ; yet, perhaps, were she my wife, I should wish her to have a few of those amiable weaknesses by which her sex are sometimes even distinguished.”

Lord David maintained his first opinion ; but, as it grew late, rose to retire, promising to call in the morning, having, though so lately a guest at Hartley House, been included in the invitation to dine there the following day, which he had made a merit of accepting.

To return to Grosvenor-square.—Seldom had Ferdinand seen his wife in better spirits, since her illness, than during breakfast, the morning after she had been introduced to the Orkney family, of whom she again spoke in the highest terms to Mrs. Montgomery.

Ferdinand, more upon his guard, talked of Elinor rather as a beautiful child, than a fine young woman, carelessly inquiring of Duncan how old she was ? Before he could reply, a servant came to let him know a gentleman wished to speak with him in the next room.

“ With me !” cried Duncan, rather surprised, having no friends that he knew of in London.

“ The gentleman enquired for the Marquis of Donalbain, my Lord.”

“ Well, but what prevented his sending in his name ?” demanded Ferdinand.

“ He merely asked, my Lord, whether the Marquis of Donalbain did not reside here, and upon being answered in the affirmative, desired he might be informed a gentleman wished to speak with him. I then requested to know his name ; he replied, it mattered not, his Lordship would be glad to see him.”

“ Why

“Why then I will go and see if he told truth,” said Duncan, leaving the room.—He was absent more than half an hour, and when he returned into the breakfast parlour, looked as if he had been very much provoked, instead of pleased, with his visitor.

Ferdinand did not affect to notice his discomposure, but proposed walking into Albemarle-street, presuming Lady Hartley, who expected her grandfather Hanson, to call in the course of the morning, would not chuse to be out of the way, as his coming was uncertain. Duncan made no objection, nor took any notice of the recent visitor to his friend, who made no enquiries, but conversed upon indifferent subjects till they reached Albemarle-street.

The ladies were gone a shopping, and the Duke was ever pleased to see Lord Hartley, who told him a long sea voyage

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had

had been particularly recommended by the Marchioness's physicians ; but as she was even averse to the idea of crossing the Channel, he intended to feign business in Normandy, to induce her to cross from Brighton to Dieppe, by which means he should be able to keep her out at sea for a few days, without her being aware of his intention ; he therefore thought his Grace, Mr. Ausby, and the ladies, had better cross to Calais, and give him and the Marchioness the meeting at Paris ; for them to be longer at sea than was absolutely necessary, to whom it was not medically prescribed, was certainly not desirable.

The Duke highly applauded the Marquis's notion, agreeing with him that three or four hours would be as much as he wished to spend upon the water ; but promised to start the subject of their journey during dinner, when the Marquis could mention his intention of crossing into Normandy,

mandy, and then they would finally decide where to meet in France. Lord Hartley then departed, leaving Duncan with his grandfather, and his compliments for the Ladies.

Mr. Hanson, whom he found at home, and to whom he communicated his scheme respecting keeping the Marchioness as long as possible at sea, gave him infinite credit for the idea, and promised to further his plan, by requesting him to transact some business at Rouen for him, where he had several correspondents, agreeing to stay dinner for that purpose; indeed, he rather wished to see the Duke of Orkney, who rejoiced that chance had thus thrown them together; though he assured the good old man he should not have left town without visiting Layton.

“Then do me the favour, your Grace,” was the reply, “to dine at my cottage with all these good ladies and gentlemen the day after
after

after to-morrow. I wish to see as much as possible of my grand-children before they leave England, and shall esteem myself honoured if you will increase our family circle.

The Duke readily promised for himself and party ; and Lord David, presuming himself invited, bowed his assent.—The conversation next reverted to the approaching journey : It was agreed that, to oblige Mr. Hanson, the Hartley party, to which, at Ferdinand's earnest request, Duncan was included, should cross to Dieppe, and the Orkney party, to Calais, both agreeing to meet at Paris, where they meant to spend a week or ten days.

Lord David hoped to join them there, when he should renew his solicitations for their company at Florence. This kind intimation was answered as it deserved, and soon after the party broke up.

The

The following morning Lady Hartley and Mrs. Montgomery accompanied Mr. Hanson to Layton, where they proposed remaining that day and the next, and returning the succeeding one with Ferdinand, who had too many engagements upon his hands to allow of his spending more than one night at the worthy man's villa. They were but just drove from the door, when Duncan was again informed, a gentleman wished to speak with him upon business.

"Z—ds, how I am pestered with visitors!" cried he; "'tis the same fellow, I suppose, who refused to send in his name yesterday."

"No, my Lord; this gentleman desired me to inform you his name was Crowberry, and that he was come upon business of importance."

"Very well; I will wait upon him," replied Duncan, who made a sort of pause, as if desirous of consulting Ferdinand, but finally left the room without speaking.

Lord

Lord Hartley presumed some unpleasant circumstance had occurred; but neither chusing to enquire, nor to offer, unasked, his advice, he retired into his study, where he was busily employed in looking over some papers his steward had left for his inspection; when Duncan, evidently very much disturbed, after previously knocking, entered the room, exclaiming, the moment he was within the door, "I have got into the queerest hobble, my dear friend, and can't tell how to extricate myself; pray advise me how to proceed."

"You shall not only have my best advice, but may command my best services," was the reply, "therefore pray explain yourself."

"You are too good, by Jove, for I have been a d—d foolish fellow, and I am sure you will say so when you know all."

"Then come to the point without any farther ceremony; I am no Cato, therefore have no right either to preach to or censure others."

"Well,

“ Well, you will stand my friend if it should come to grand-dad’s ears, which between ourselves I think very likely, for I am convinced they will do every thing to spite me : however, as I must confess my folly to be assisted by your good advice, you must know, my yesterday morning’s visitor was that fellow Barwell, who has followed me from Coombe ; and because he could not frighten me into becoming his relation, he has set a d—d lawyer upon my back, who is now in the next room ; an immense paunch-gutted fellow, all politeness and palaver, who only wishes to accommodate matters to my satisfaction, as he would persuade me. Now, if his upper story be but furnished in proportion to his bulk, he must be an amazing clever fellow, and I am very unable to cope with even a fool of his profession, though I believe they are all more or less knaves. However, I have left him to cool his heels while I came to consult you ; for you must know, my former

former favourite, Marianne Wilson, means to force me to make an honest woman of her, that is, to make her my wife, which positively never entered my head, even in former times, for reasons I will declare, if she persists in her folly; but when I first noticed her, she drew me into a correspondence, first, by exchanging a few stupid verses, which we puzzled our brains to compose, for she is no fool, whatever I may prove myself; and, in short, either in those verses, or a few rhodomontade letters about loving till death, and such stuff, she or her friends have discovered a promise of marriage, which, upon my soul, I never intended to make, nor do I think I ever used any words likely to be so construed; though, as a law suit was the least of my expectations when I wrote them, I don't suppose I was so guarded as I ought to have been in my terms; still the only sentence I think they can have tortured into a meaning to answer their purpose is, in a letter I wrote
in

in answer to one of her's, full of reproaches for my having cut the cake without waiting for grace, in which I informed her marriage was a cure for wounded reputations. But, surely, that was not promising to become her husband ; yet this wild plan has been some time in agitation ; for the very last evening I spent at Coombe, I was beset by her two sisters, Betty Barwell, and her'elf, to perform this promise, which I was not even conscious of having made. At first I thought they were joking, but soon found the whole plan had been concerted, for not one of them but heard me say something amounting to a promise to make Marianne my wife ; so at last they worked me into a rage, made me send them all to the d--l, and set out for Daddy Price's, where I did not return in a very good temper, as both you and him remarked, but I was in hopes they would have been convinced I was not to be frightened into any of their measures, and so

would

would have dropped their scheme, as I intended, and told them as much, to make Marianne a handsome present, but nothing will serve her but a title. This she wrote me the morning I left Coombe, and now Barwell has followed me to London at his own expence: he told me to leave my final answer, as he meant to see justice done his cousin, who has no other male protector but himself. Such is the substance of what he said yesterday, and if he had not taken himself quietly off as soon as he had heard my final answer, I should certainly, indeed I told him so, have kicked him into the street. However, to conclude, the great man, who is to force me to comply with their wishes, is now in the house, as they are terribly afraid I should leave England before they have cheated me out of a little money; so pray advise me how to proceed, for I am not competent to reason with lawyers."

"I compre-

“ I comprehend their exact views,” replied Lord Hartley ; “ money, as you very justly observe, is their great object, and to a small sum I think Marianne entitled ; as for their pretending to establish a promise of marriage, that is all mere bombast, therefore depend upon it, if you are perfectly explicit with me, I will instruct you how to defeat their schemes without having recourse to his Grace.”

“ Then I shall thank you, my better angel.”

“ No thanks till I have got you out of jeopardy. In the first place, is Marianne in London ?”

“ Oh ! yes, with her eldest sister, and half a hundred witnesses are ready to come up at moment’s warning to swear just what Crowbury pleases, I suppose ; but, as I told Barwell, they had taken a very foolish method, for they must long since have known I was not to be frightened into any thing,
and

and that I can be as obstinate as old Price when thoroughly provoked."

"Very well; but I presume you can have no objection to see Marianne in my presence, and that of her friends?"

"None in the least, though I should not wish any body else to know how silly I have acted."

"Then step and inform Mr. Crowbury you will meet his clients a couple of hours hence at his house, and as you will not object to any friend of their's being present, you expect to be allowed the same liberty; and if they give us the meeting, which I don't much doubt, I think, if you follow my instructions, we shall be able to accommodate matters without putting them to the expence of a law-suit."

Duncan readily complied with everything his friend proposed, as he was very anxious to have the matter amicably settled. Mr.

Crowbury

Crowbury had a very particular engagement at the time his Lordship mentioned, but he would put it off, to convince the Marquis of Donalbain how ready he was to oblige him, taking his leave with every mark of the most obsequious respect. During this interval Ferdinand listened with more attention than perhaps the subject deserved, to the commencement and progress of Duncan's amour with his Miss M. Wilson, and gave him every necessary instruction how to proceed with her and her family : observing, they deserved no lenity, and must be treated as they deserved : nor was her party idle, as they were all waiting the result of Crowbury's conference at his house, and learnt with great satisfaction Duncan had appointed to see them there, which they considered as the preliminary step towards a reconciliation. Crowbury, upon their representation of the matter, had assured them the case laid in a nut-shell ; and if the young Peer
proved

proved obstinate, which he rather expected and indeed hoped, all things considered, why he would ensure them at least twenty thousand pounds damages, with which sum Marianne declared she should be perfectly satisfied, as she could not expect Lord Donalbain would make her a very good husband, after forcing her to have recourse to such harsh measures to induce him to do her justice: they, therefore, assisted by Crowbury, planned the proper mode of attack; Captain Barwell drinking a few tumblers of gin twist to raise his spirits, declaring he would spend every farthing he was worth in his dear cousin's defence.

Thus was he going on, when the Marquis of Hartley and Donalbain were shewn into Mr. Crowbury's office by a clerk. The lawyer rose to receive them; but his clients, including Lord Hartley in their displeasure, kept their seats; the young ladies tossing back their heads, and endeavouring

vouring to appear of consequence ; the Captain hemming, stretching his legs, and affecting to look big. Duncan, who entered last, immediately exclaimed, “ So you still persist in your folly, Marianne ? ”

“ Folly, my Lord, I scorn your words.”

“ Folly, indeed ! ” retorted the sister, “ I suppose you fancy, because you are a Lord, you can do as you please, but I believe you will find the odds of it. Thank God the law is open to every body.”

“ Yes, yes, and we can afford to pay for justice as well as his Lordship,” said the Captain ; “ I never yet struck to an enemy’s ship because I was her inferior in guns or metal.”

“ You strangely forget yourself, Barwell,” replied Duncan ; “ but I come here amicably inclined, though not fonder of being imposed upon than you are.”

“ My Lord Marquis,” said the attorney, bowing almost to the ground to Ferdinand, “ you are no doubt come as a me-

diator in this unpleasant business; it would therefore be proper you should hear what my clients have to say in support of their charge; they are total strangers to me, and were only recommended to me by a friend in the neighbourhood of Coombe. Still I must own they appear to have justice on their side; and I am of opinion a British Jury will grant them very heavy damages, should Lord Donalbain persist in not fulfilling his promise; as, in cases of this kind, your Lordship must know the law makes no distinction of persons."

"Be so obliging, Sir, as to state your client's expectations from my friends in as few words as possible," replied Ferdinand.

"They alledge his Lordship promised marriage to Miss Marianne, my Lord."

"Verbally or in writing?" asked the Marquis.

"Both, both!" exclaimed the two ladies and Buwe'l.

"And you are ready to produce the one

and swear to the other, I suppose ?” rejoined his Lordship.

“ We can do both with safety, my Lord,” replied the eldest sister ; “ and the Marquis there shall make an honest woman of my sister, or pay her down twenty thousand pounds the least farthing.”

“ You are now fully acquainted with the reasonable expectations of these ladies, Donalbain,” said the smiling Ferdinand.

“ Reasonable, indeed !” he replied : “ Why, Marianne, how the devil am I to comply with your first request ? You have positively acknowledged more than I ever did or intended to have done. Really I begin to have my doubts whether you may not have equal claims respecting your reputation upon some other people ; as for my having ever promised you marriage, you know ’tis false ; and, may I never kiss another pretty girl, if I would marry even an angel from heaven that had allowed me—.”

Marianne burst into a violent flood of tears.

“Nay, nay,” cried Duncan, “I neither meant to make you cry nor blush; but this is no time to mince the matter. I suppose you have told your sister and cousin that I promised you a hundred a-year if you chose to put yourself under my protection. You turned up your nose at my offer, and I am therefore now resolved not to give you a shilling: and as for your busy meddling sister, if she says too much, perhaps I may make Coombe rather unpleasant to her.”

“Me, my Lord! I scorn your words, and defy you to scandalize me.”

“Remember the little back parlour, Sal, and the bribe you offered me to hold my tongue:—the schoolmaster and I am still friends, and he will——”

“You good-for-nothing, scandalous creature,” exclaimed the young lady, following

lowing her sister's example, and began sobbing aloud.

“Now may I be smothered,” cried Duncan, “if I came here with any intention to make either of you cry ; but if you play at bowls you must expect to take rubs. However, let me hear the promise read upon which you mean to found your law-suit.”

“Why, really, Marquis,” said Crowbury, “my clients' claims do not seem to be so well supported as they gave me to understand, and I must acknowledge the letter I hold in my hand admits of various interpretations after what I have heard, which I was very far from suspecting ; but I obey your Lordship ;” reading a sentence something similar to what Duncan had mentioned to Ferdinand.

“And can you conceive, Mr. Crowbury, or do you suppose any British jury will conceive these words constitute a promise

mise of marriage ?” asked Lord Hartley, looking him full in the face.

“ I certainly did not read the sentence with due attention before : the word marriage, I now perceive, is underscored, and a jury would consider that as a joke ; still, I should not have scrupled undertaking the cause, if I had not witnessed the late conviction, as I am now fully aware evidence will be produced that will totally invalidate our claims. My clients stated the case in a very different manner : I can now only recommend their trusting to Lord Donalbain’s generosity, who, I am sure, will act honourably by Miss Marianne.”

“ In my sister’s place, I should scorn to touch his money ; and give me leave to tell you, Mr. Crowbury, you have very much misled us ; I wish I was a little better acquainted with London, I warrant me I would have law for my money.”

“ My dear ma’am, I can give you as
much

much law as any man of my profession for the same money, and will even now, if you require it, carry on your suit ; only remember I no longer insure you success, now I find how matters really stand between the noble Marquis and Miss Maittanne ; and I shall expect pretty good security for the money I shall advance : besides, I must observe the lady's reputation is much more likely to suffer than his Lordship's. I begin to perceive a gentleman in these cases can laugh when strictly close questioned by an adverse counsellor, besides the temptation would almost excuse premeditated seduction, and that is not expected to be established. Accommodation therefore upon any terms is what I now recommend."

"A very pretty journey this is likely to turn out," said Captain Barwell, who had latterly remained mute ; "here I suffered myself to be persuaded you held a formal promise of marriage, and that our claim

none of the former, though they were severally introduced to him, and all seemed anxious to promote the purpose for which they had met, namely, amusement.

The dinner was served in a style which did credit to the master of the house, and Duncan took an opportunity of telling his friend, that he found the French knew what good living was, and that kickshaws went down very well now and then for a change, but he supposed he should be heartily sick of them before he again came along-side of a good sirloin. One, however, appeared with the second course; nor was its general companion, a plumb-pudding, omitted, to the infinite delight of most of the English. The desert corresponded with the repast, and abundance of all sorts of wines were to be found on the table, besides punch of various sorts and qualities. French and English toasts were given alternately, and in such quick succession,

sion, that in a very short time the greater part of the company felt the powerful effects of their too copious libations. But the Marquis of Hartley, possessing an excellent constitution, and never giving way to that riotous mirth, which co-operates with liquor to intoxicate, generally rose sober even from the most jovial parties, as he made it a rule never to taste but one sort of wine, and of that as sparingly as his wish to avoid appearing singular would admit, by which means he was frequently enabled to form just conclusions of his less sober companions; and when ever he fancied there was any design entertained to throw him off his guard, he was more than usually cautious, having been once or twice so ensnared, which had induced him to form a resolution at such times absolutely to refuse drinking more than he chose. He, indeed, had had occasion more than once for all his fortitude to withstand the persuasions and raillery of his friends, preferring

preferring the appellation of milk-sop to that of a jovial fellow, and well knowing that drinking, unlike other vices, acquires strength from its pursuit. Under these ideas a singular thought struck him at the Count's, where every persuasion was made use of by that gentleman, as well as by his French and some of his English guests, to intoxicate the rest, though the General continually repeated, that every gentleman was at liberty to follow his own inclination, as he wished no one to drink more than might be agreeable, while the French gentlemen, on the other hand, were strictly attentive to oblige every one to do honour to the various toasts, recommending the most palatable wines to those who seemed most averse to repeat their libations.

Duncan, owing to the mixture of liquors, had seldom been more overtaken, while Ferdinand, who had drank nothing but claret, was more and more convinced,
from

from the looks of some of the company, and the leers and winks of others, when they thought themselves unobserved, that there was some scheme in agitation; and he wished, if possible, to discover to what it tended, having a shrewd suspicion that their host intended to make them pay pretty dear for their sumptuous entertainment; he therefore affected inebriety with great success, now and then appearing to doze for a few seconds, and fluttering, while he returned wrong answers when addressed; in short, he played his part so well, that he was thought to be the most in liquor of the party, though, in fact, he was never more perfectly in his senses, and could even have drunk a few more glasses without feeling any ill effects from the excess. By degrees some of the French gentlemen began to file off, under pretence of other engagements, others suffered themselves to be prevailed upon to remain; and faro was at length proposed

proposed for an hour or so before they separated.

Sir Apfley Watkins entered into conversation with Lord Hartley, enquiring whether he was fond of play?

“Merely by way of amusement,” replied his Lordship.

The Baronet said, he had also got rid of his former predilection in favour of cards and dice, and made it a rule never to play, except in private houses, such as the Count's for example, where nothing would be won, or lost worthy mentioning. The Count wished his guests to amuse themselves how they chose; for his own part, he never played, except at *toto*; meanwhile a *faro* bank was opened in an adjoining room by a French Count, and those who knew least what they were about were the most

and anxious to try their fortune. The Count refused to quit his chair while a single gentleman would keep him company. Ferdinand suffered the Baronet to lead him into the next room, that they might see who won and who lost; and having looked on for a short time, Sir Apfley professed to feel an irresistible propensity, he said, to try his luck, and advised Lord Hartley to follow his example. His Lordship, who chose not to appear to have a will of his own, readily consented, determined to discover whether Sir Apfley was really the man of honour he had hitherto supposed him, or whether, having begun, like many more, by being a pigeon, he had finished by becoming one of the *black leg* fraternity, notwithstanding his ancient and honourable descent. A short time, however, convinced him, the Baronet had not adopted the most laudable method of retrieving his affairs; for, having assumed the greatest indifference respecting

speeling

speaking the game, he suffered Sir Apfley to put down his stakes and take up his winnings, till he found himself a loser of upwards of thirty pounds; and having condoled with him upon this continued run of bad-luck, the Baronet advised him to double his stakes. Ferdinand objected; he had no more cash about him; so saying, affecting to be quite overpowered by the quantity he had drank, he rose from the faro table, and flung himself upon a sofa at the other end of the room. Sir Apfley followed, and endeavoured to rouse him; declaring he would continue to play, and that they should go halves win or lose, the Marquis only replying, "No, no, I detest faro."

In this state of drunken obstinacy, as Sir Apfley supposed, he found it necessary to leave him, and returning to the table, seated himself next to Duncan, who was really as tipsy as Ferdinand affected to be; the Baronet

Baronet pointed the latter out to him, affecting to laugh at such a milk-fop, and challenging Donalbain to drink a tumbler of arrack punch with him. His proposal was readily agreed to; the Baronet next proposing, in a whisper, that they should endeavour to break the bank, as it would be good fun to do the Frenchman. Duncan, who neither knew nor cared what he was about, replied, with all his heart: the game was therefore kept up for some time with infinite spirit, every succeeding loss encouraging the parties to double their stakes by the advice of the sober part of the company, who pillaged them without any remorse. Ferdinand could both see and hear how matters went on, and perceived, as he had suspected, the strangers were all paying pretty dear for their entertainment; though the Count did not join the faro party, nay, several times came to persuade the young Englishmen to return to the bottle, observing, it was only Frenchmen
who.

who left good wine for cards. Several times Ferdinand was tempted to put an end to a scene so disgraceful to people who pretended to the title of gentlemen, particularly as he saw Duncan's money was now very quickly transferred to the banker and Baronet, who perfectly understood each other ; but as he knew he had no considerable sum about him, he resolved to see what lengths this set of gamblers would dare to go with the inebriated and inexperienced set they had to deal with, though he would not have suffered any of the young gentlemen to have been drawn in to lose sums likely to injure their fortunes, or to expose them to the resentment of their friends, and indeed no experience is like that purchased at some expence, though he began to wax warm, when he perceived the art his Welch friend had recourse to, to induce the unguarded Duncan to double and treble their stakes, with a view of breaking the bank, as he being

of age, and one of the richest youths among the players, he was an object of particular attention to this nefarious set. The Baronet had therefore undertaken to draw him on, while others were committed to the care of French Marquisses and Counts for the same purpose, who either gave them instructions, or went their halves; and thus the game went on, till some of the young men were stripped of every shilling they had about them, and it soon came to Duncan's turn, who, being called upon by his companion for a fresh supply, stammered out, "Why, d—mme, I have not got any more;" turning out his pockets as a confirmation of what he advanced: but had he not some paper in his pocket-book? English bank notes were current in Paris.—He had none about him.—Then the Baronet must supply him, he had fortunately received a large sum at his banker's that very morning.—Duncan made no objection, but when a piece of paper was

was

was presented him to sign, by way of security, he seemed to have rather recovered his recollection, and inquired why he was to sign his name to what he had not wrote?

“ ‘Tis merely an acknowledgment in return for a hundred Louis I mean to lend you,” replied the Baronet.

“ Then I will not borrow them,” said Duncan.

“ Nay, don’t let the banker enrich himself with our spoils. Suppose, if you are averse to signing this note, you apply to Lord Hartley, he may have some money about him.”

“ Plenty, to my certain knowledge, for I called with him at Mr. Somebody’s before we came here, but what am I the better for that; he is dead drunk, and I should not choose to pick his pocket.”

“ Well, if you won’t play, let’s have another glass of punch to raise our spirits, though I know we shall have better luck if we do but persevere,” calling for two tumblers

blers of punch, which were no sooner bought than swallowed, and Duncan, as expected, offered the Baronet to put down a large stake in both their names. They lost; the Welshmen swore he would not give it in, but in a short time a second note was presented to Duncan, who was informed he was a hundred-and-twenty louis in debt, which, with the stake then down, made two hundred, and the note was for that amount. The last glass had completely stupified the young rustic; he therefore made no reply. Sir Apsley raised his head, and placed a pen between his fingers; the motion roused him; and after looking the Baronet full in the face, he frowned, and flung the pen from him, and would have relapsed into his former insensibility, if he had not been told in a very peremptory manner, he must sign the note. Ferdinand was upon the point of starting up to prevent him, when Duncan, upon his hand being seized the second time, excessively

sively provoked at being thus disturbed, gave the Baronet such a box on the ear, he fairly made him stagger, and rising at the same moment he placed himself in a boxing attitude, to the no small amusement of part of the company, crying out, "Come on, come on—I am your man; if I am drunk, you must not come your tricks upon travellers neither: beat me a little till I am sober, and then I will give you a belly-full; and all the whole kit of the Frenchmen in the bargain. I mind no man;"—but fell back into his chair, as he concluded.

Sir Apsley observed, he should not take any notice of what the Marquis of Donalbain either did or said in his present situation, as he was convinced he would readily repay the money he had advanced in the morning.

"Why, you have got all I had, and be
d. -d

to blame, I shall not allow any one to reproach her for my faults. so now you know my mind, and will, I trust, act accordingly."

Had the Captain been thus threatened before the spirit of the gin twist had in a great measure evaporated, there is no knowing what might have been the consequence: as it was, he took all Duncan said very calmly, and protested he was very sorry if he had either said or done any thing to offend his Lordship; that he had positively been misinformed, or he would have acted very differently; and his Lordship could not have a greater proof of his having been taken in, than his having voluntarily taken all the expence upon himself.

"I am glad to hear you had so much money to throw away," rejoined Duncan, "though, perhaps, this affair may render
you"

You more circumspect in future;—but I must wish you a good morning.”

Marianne felt all her love return for her cousin's spirited adviser, and dropped a tear, while she hoped God would bless him though he had rendered her miserable, taking leave with her sister and crest-fallen cousin.

Duncan then told Lord Hartley what he had done, according to his advice, respecting providing for her, and gave the attorney orders to purchase the annuity; Ferdinand undertaking to find the money, as he perceived Duncan could not without inconvenience spare such a sum without applying to the Duke, which he knew he particularly wished to avoid.

Mr. Crowbury wished to have detailed how he had been deceived, laying all the blame upon Birwell, whom he affirmed to

be much the most to blame, and readily promised to procure the annuity with all possible dispatch, and to bring his account, &c. into Grosvenor-square as soon as he had completed the bargain.

CHAP. XXIV.

THE friends were no sooner in the street than they indulged in a hearty laugh at Crowbury and his quondam mistress. Duncan then thanked Lord Hartley for having taught him how to deal with Barwell and his cousin, protesting that crow and the paunch-gutted lawyer would have baffled all his efforts to get out of their clutches. However, Marianne would not be beholden to her boasting foolish cousin, though he richly deserved to have been every farthing of the money out of pocket, and he had so thoroughly displayed his own base views, that it would prevent him from ever noticing

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ing him in future either at Coombe or elsewhere. They called in Albemarle-street before they went home, where Ferdinand readily agreed to dine, but left the party early in the evening, having many preparations yet to make for his impending journey, and knowing he should spend the next evening at Layton.

The Duke was very much pleased at the increasing intimacy which appeared to subsist between Duncan and his favourite Lord Hartley, though he was not without his fears (knowing the latter to be immensely rich, and that he lived in the most elegant and expensive style,) lest his grandson should adopt notions in his house which would not suit his comparative small income; yet he persuaded himself he already saw so great an amendment in his manners and language, that he was convinced the advantages he would derive from the connection would more than balance the habit of expence it was

was possible he might incur in his company. Ausby reminded his Grace, Lord Hartley neither gamed nor drank, and was, in his opinion, the most proper mentor and companion that could have been selected for a youth brought up like Lord Donalbain, who had already lost some of his rusticity, and would improve daily with so excellent a model before his eyes.

The next day the whole party went to Layton. Ferdinand drove Duncan in his curricule, who owned he should like just such a machine, and such another pair of bloods. His friend reminded him they were going abroad, where he would find such an equipage rather an incumbrance, though he meant, the Marchioness being partial to an open carriage, to send his over solely upon her account. After a most agreeable day, during which the courteous Lord David was unusually lavish of his encomiums, the Orkney party, even to Lord Donalbain, (who presumed his friend might

have

have some private matters to talk over with his grandfather,) returned to town. Ferdinand certainly had many things to say to the old gentleman, who was on his part very anxious to learn his real opinion of the Duke, they therefore rather sat up late; and Mr. Hanson having promised to dine in Albemarle-street, Lord Hartley drove his curicle home immediately after breakfast, leaving the ladies to accompany the old gentleman to town. As he was turning out of the new road into Paddington, he was rather surprised to see Duncan come out of a small but decent house, and not having seen his friend take to his heels the moment he was without the door, Ferdinand pushed forward, calling out "Where so fast!"

Duncan, though very much disconcerted, instantly stopped, saying, though not without hesitation, "I have been taking a walk."

"And paying a visit, it should appear,"
replied

replied the laughing Ferdinand; “but get into the curricie since you are in such haste.”

“Zounds, I am a shocking bungler at an intrigue I begin to find,” he replied, doing as he was desired; “though I positively meant to tell you where I had been when we met. But yesterday morning, you must know, I received a letter from Marianne, in which she informed me that they had no sooner left Crowbury’s than both her sister and cousin began to abuse her most unmercifully; in short, after a desperate quarrel, she took an opportunity to give them both the slip with what few cloaths she had brought to London, and the fifty pounds I had given her, and had taken a lodging at the very house you saw me come out of, where she requested to see me once more, to give her my advice what to do, as she was determined not to return to Coombe. So, being at liberty last night, why, I complied with her wish, and

and could not get away sooner, we had so many little things to talk over. It was therefore well for me you were alone, as I am fated to be discovered."

"Nay, since you intended to put me in your confidence, it matters not, and I really can't blame you for obliging the fair Marianne, whom I presume you will not see many times more before you leave England; and I can't suppose you mean to take her in your suite abroad."

"No, upon my honour; and I do assure you I have been giving her very good advice; that is, I have persuaded her to endeavour to board and lodge in some respectable tradesman's house, where she may follow some honourable calling to increase her income, else I have sworn never to notice her when I do return; but if I find her in a good situation, and she is likely to meet with a good husband, I have promised to make her a handsome wedding present."

“ Spoken like an oracle !” said Ferdinand : “ I only hope she will conform to your wishes. She is certainly handsome, and may yet marry well if she acts prudently. But what has become of her cousin and sister ?”

“ She left them at the inn where the stage-coach they came in put up, and there, as she says, they may stay ; but she wrote immediately to her youngest sister, to desire her to send all her clothes to London as soon as possible, under pretence of being engaged to stay ; but has acknowledged her cousin and sister will return in a few days, which she supposes they must, or they will not have money to carry them home ; she therefore hopes her clothes will be upon the road, before they arrive ; she has ordered them to be directed to be left at the warehouse till called for, and she has no fears of their returning to London when once they get home ; and should the worst she can expect happen, she has money to buy more, she observes.”

“ Upon my word, she seems to possess very brilliant talents for intrigue,” replied Ferdinand ; “ I only hope his will be the last time she will exert them.”

They soon arrived at Hartley House ; and on the fourth day after this adventure Lord and Lady Hartley, Duncan, and Mrs. Montgomery, left town for Brighton with a proper suite ; and a vessel having been previously engaged, set sail, though not with a very fair wind, for the coast of Normandy ; and on the very same day the Orkney family took the road to Dover, which they reached in perfect safety, and taking the advantage of a strong breeze, were landed at Calais the following morning, after a short though rough passage of three hours.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE day they landed, and the two following, were devoted to repose by the Duke of Orkney, whose advanced age made him particularly sensible of fatigue. During this interval they arranged their resting places between there and Paris ; when Aufby wishing Lisle had lain in the direct road, his Grace immediately recollected that gentleman had a relation who had resided there for a number of years, having at first gone over through motives of economy, and latterly fixed his residence there from choice ; he therefore instantly said, “ Let us make it in our way ; we shall reach Paris long before our friends—we have nothing to hurry

ry us, and I suppose there are as good inns upon that road as the other."

"To the full," cried Aufby; "but I can't think of taking you such a round."

"I am determined to go: Lisle is allowed to be a remarkable fine town, and I brought Elinor from home to shew her the world."

"Certainly, my dear Sir," said the lively girl; "I have heard Lisle compared to our Bath, and understand it is termed little Paris; so I shall see the capital in miniature before it bursts upon me in all its glory: So pray make no objections, my dear papa, for when you were my age, I dare say, you were as fond of fights as I am."

It was therefore finally agreed they should begin their journey the next morning, sleep at Cassel the first night; and at Lisle, which they hoped to reach by a fashionable dinner hour, the next.

Aufby had, from the time of his quitting England, been in habits of correspondence with the relation he wished to visit, whom he could not blame for living abroad, as he was fond of shew and expence, and he could much easier enjoy the one and support the other at Lille, than in London, having not more than six hundred a year, with which, in that city, he maintained a very genteel appearance.

The Duke and his party reached this capital of French Flanders without any thing occurring worthy notice, and took up their lodgings at the Hotel de Portugal, the best inns being all full. It was near dark before they arrived, owing to their having met with bad horses at Bailleul, and having been detained for the want of them at ~~Ammentiers~~, their dinner had therefore kept back near an hour.

As

As soon as they rose from table, which was not before eight, Ausby sent for a *fiacre*, which he ordered to his relation's in the Rue Royale. Mr. Murray was enjoying the company of a few friends, but was exceedingly happy to see his unexpected guest, with whom he had scarcely exchanged a few general inquiries, before the female part of his family joined them, dressed for a masquerade, having been for some time invited to an entertainment of that sort, which was to take place that evening at the Town Hall, at the expence of a Swiss regiment, who were quitting the garrison, and who meant it as a farewell compliment to the other regiments, and the nobility and gentry, from whom they had met with great civilities. All the English, resident there, had been particularly invited: Mr. Murray intended to have gone, he said, but should now put his wife and daughter under the protection of some of his friends, unless Mr. Ausby would agree to accompany them,

them, being confident he could procure him admission, and gentlemen were not required to go masked.

Ausby neither wished to prevent him from accompanying his family, nor to join their party, he therefore proposed returning to his inn, and calling upon them again in the morning. To this Marray positively objected, alledging that his company would afford him ten times more pleasure than he expected to enjoy at the ball, except he made one of the party.

“Then, rather than keep you at home, I will spend an hour or so at the Hotel de Ville,” rejoined Ausby, conceiving it imprudent to separate a father from his family upon such an occasion. They therefore set out immediately, and found the rooms already crowded.

Ausby was amused by the general hilarity which seemed to prevail in the company,
and

and found so much to admire in the dances, that the time insensibly slipped away, and his relation was by no means inclined to remind him that his hour had expired;—they therefore continued to mingle in the crowd, and to criticise or praise the various dresses and characters which met their view. Among others, three gentlemen, in British regimentals, and like himself unmasked, attracted his notice.

“Those are Englishmen, I presume?” said Ausby to his companion.

“Undoubtedly,” he replied; “and style themselves Colonel Cullimore, Major Pearson, and Captain Ramsden; but I know two out of the three never bore a commission in our service, and are neither more or less than three broken down gamesters fresh imported from Spa, where, I presume, they were very unsuccessful; here, however, they pass for officers upon half-pay, who find it convenient, for that very reason, to live abroad; and I do not like to lower my
 I 5 countrymen

countrymen in the eyes of the French, so I suffer them to tell their tale uncontradicted. I really wish they may not expose themselves before they leave the place ; though they have been here before, and have hitherto behaved with tolerable circumspection. I think, however, their real calling begins to be suspected by the nobility of the town :—Let us keep them in tight, for they generally have some scheme or another in their heads ; the Major is a most insolent fellow, and really rather feared, being a most excellent swordsman.”

While Mr. Murray was giving this detail, a fourth gentleman, in French regimentals, joined the English party.

“ That is an officer in the service of the Grand Monarque, a particular friend of Major Pearson, and allowed even by himself to be his superior in fencing. His name is Marson ; and, perhaps, their friendship originates

originates in their fear of each other ; however, between them, they positively domineer over all the young men in the city, having each of them received and sent a few challenges, and they have hitherto been victorious in every contest, which has so much encreased their natural impertinence, that they positively only ask their adversaries where they will chuse to have a vein opened."

" In my opinion," said Ausby, " two such fellows ought to be excluded from all rational society ; nay, I should be for having them kicked out of the town I inhabited, as I never could bear a man who made his skill in fencing subservient to such odious ends."

" Your sentiments perfectly coincide with mine," replied Murray ; " but I have made it a rule never to concern myself about any of our exiles, as I style this party, taking care to form no acquaintance but with Englishmen of good character :

I have, therefore, resided fourteen years in Lille, without having once visited the Town House, except in search of pleasure. I bought experience at home, you know, and though I paid pretty dear for my knowledge, it has been useful to me here—But observe that tall stout fine fellow passing our countrymen; has not he the true martial strut? He is one of the first noblemen in Flanders—the Marquis de Clerval.”

Ausby stopped suddenly, his countenance betraying evident marks of surprise, while he said, “Are you acquainted with the gentleman who has got hold of his arm?”

“No, I do not remember ever having seen him before. He is a man of consequence by his company; a Frenchman, I suppose.”

“You are mistaken in your last conjecture,” replied Ausby, “for he is not only a true-born Englishman, but glories in that name: He is a man of consequence, and
I own

I own I did not expect to see him here ;” then passing forward, and having overtaken the two gentlemen, he caught hold, as he thought, of the arm of Lord Hartley, crying, “ Why, in the name of wonder, who would have thought of seeing you Lordship at Lisle ? We thought you safe in Normandy.—How is the Marchioness ?—Did her marine trip answer the desired end ?—Where is Lord Donalbain ?”——

The person thus addressed instantly stopped, and fixed his very expressive eyes upon Ausby, who was perfectly convinced he was addressing his newly-acquired friend, as he was unmasked ; a handsome black and gold domino concealed his dress ; his hair, which was out of powder, waved in elegant ringlets over his forehead, and flowed half way down his back ; a hat and feather, the loop in jewellery, completed his dress ; and the mask, which the heat had induced him to remove from his face, he still carried in his hand.

Having

Having gazed some seconds at Ausby, he replied, "You are certainly mistaken, Sir, or take me for some other person ; for I really am not acquainted either with the lady or gentleman you enquired after."

Ausby paused, and again examined his features—then exclaimed, "Why, your Lordship forgets you are unmasked : if you did not wish to be known, why did you shew your face ?"

"I have no wish to conceal it, Sir ; but I am convinced you mistake me for some other person ; for I am confident I never had the pleasure of seeing you before."

"Good heavens ! Lord Hartley, why thus needlessly perplex me ? no two people could be so much alike."

The stranger laughed, saying, "Upon my honour, Sir, my name is not Hartley."

"Why your voice would suffice to convince me I am right ; so now do give up the farce, and answer my question.—Con-
trary

trary winds drove you up the Channel, I presume, and you were obliged to put in to either Dunkirk or Ostend."

Again the young man laughed, and said, "It is very strange, Sir, you should thus persist in knowing a person, to whom I am convinced you are a perfect stranger. You appear to be an Englishman, and you may take my word I never yet was in Albion."

Ausby was rather staggered, yet the resemblance was so perfect, he begged pardon with a very bad grace, agreeing there was a possibility he was mistaken; if not, he was sorry he was not informed his Lordship wished to remain *incognito*.

Thus they separated, though Ausby was still convinced in his own mind that the person he had addressed was Lord Hartley: the crowd, however, so completely impeded both this stranger and the Marquis de Clerval's progress, they were even forced back towards Ausby and Murray.

The

The pretended British officers, who were close to them, and had overheard what had passed between the former and the supposed Lord Hartley, told them they had nothing but impertinence to expect from any companion of the Marquis de Clerval, who was like all the provincial nobles, proud and insolent, but too cowardly to support his unfounded pretensions to greatness.

Neither Aufby nor Murray affected to attend to these insolent remarks; but the supposed Lord Hartley hastily turned round, and haughtily enquired, who they were who dared thus to insult his friend, which he presumed they did in English, from being conscious he was ignorant of that language.

“ We are Englishmen, Sir, in the service of our King and country, and are ready to support with our swords, what we do not scruple to advance.”

“ That

“That is a privilege granted to other nations, besides the English,” retorted the stranger.

“Why, z—ds, this is not a countryman, after all,” cried the Colonel.

“I would almost swear he is, by his voice and accent,” said the Major.

“Only let him declare himself one,” rejoined Captain Ramsden, “and I will be the first to ask his pardon; for I never willingly offended an Englishman.”

“What are those gentlemen saying?” demanded the Marquis de Clerval, in French.

The Englishmen laughed.—Ausby expecting every moment to have his suspicions confirmed, was all attention.

“They are anxious to discover who I am,” said the stranger, in the same language. Then turning to the officers; he said, “It appears, gentlemen, you came hither purposely to pick a quarrel with somebody; therefore it may as well be with me and the Marquis de Clerval as with
with

with any body else ; for my own part I never take an insult from any man, though I am not a Briton."

"Nor yet a Frenchman, 'tis my opinion," cried Marson, also in English, which he spoke like a native. "However, whoever you are, you will not frighten me any more than your brave friend ; who, though he bears a commission in the Spanish service, being, as you probably know, in that monarch's Walloon guards, dares not draw his sword in a private quarrel."

"There are brave men, and there are bullies, Sir," replied the stranger ; "I place the Marquis de Clerval in the first class—and leave it to you to suppose in which I should place you and your companions."

The Marquis de Clerval, perceiving his friend grew warm, pulled him by the arm, and whispered something in his ear ; in reply to which the young gentleman indignantly flung him from him, saying, in
French

French, "You have confirmed these people's assertions—that fellow the terror of Life! I would not have paid the city which gave me birth so poor a compliment;—daring insolence and bluster is but too often mistaken, when seconded by a little skill, for real courage."

"So, so," cried Marson, with the most provoking look, "the great Marquis de Clerval, not daring to call me or any one else out himself, has dressed up this young gentleman to fight his battles. What may he give you, pray, to espouse his cause? has he procured you a pension in case you are disabled in his service, for depend upon it I shall put both your courage and your skill to the trial."

It required more patience than the person he addressed possessed to put up with this taunting language; yet he seemed to have some command of his temper, but after eyeing Marson for a few seconds with
the

the utmost contempt he gave him such a box of the ear, he fairly made him stagger. The crowd was so great the blow was seen but by few, and they chiefly those who were concerned in the dispute, as the general hiss had prevented this private conversation from being attended to. Marson, however, now requested way might be made for him, telling the stranger, if he did not instantly follow him he would fetch him out by the nose.

“Lead on,” was the reply, “it is a fine moon-light night Pray, gentlemen, suffer Mr. Marson and me to terminate our dispute without any bustle.”

Though Ausby had felt himself very much piqued, he had listened to what had past with evident emotion. The first impression he had received respecting the stranger remained as strong as ever; he therefore stepped forward, and catching him

him by the arm, said, "For Heaven's sake remember what you are about, you are not aware with whom you have to contend. That fellow——"

"My good Sir, I perceive you are interested for me," was the reply; "why, I can't conceive, for we are certainly strangers; but I am not the less obliged to you for your caution, which will render me calm, and upon my guard, though I am no novice in the use of defensive weapons any more than my enraged adversary, who, I think, will have reason to repent his wanton insults."

They were making way through the crowd while this passed. Having reached the door, the stranger requested Ausby would not follow him any farther, as he should insist upon their respective seconds being the only spectators of the issue of their quarrel; desiring one of the centinels who stood at the door to call out the Count
de

de Bayengen, who was also, though a Fleming, in the Walloon-Guards, in the service of Spain. Marson and Major Pemberton advanced into a side room, where every body had been obliged to give their names, and leave their swords before they entered the great hall. The Count de Bayengen immediately obeyed the summons, and was soon informed why he had been called out, when he readily agreed to attend the stranger, whom he addressed as his friend, Ausby remarked. They then entered the room where their swords had been deposited, where the stranger said, speaking English to be less generally understood, he should not suffer more than one second on each side to attend them down stairs. Marson more he was ready to go alone, desiring him to come along; but Major Pemberton declared he would accompany him to witness the affair. The four gentlemen therefore immediately hurried down stairs, desiring the others, who had been privy

privy to the dispute, to prevent any one from following them, and in a few seconds they were out of sight. The Count de Bayengen, who was a native of Lisle, proposed their adjourning to a private spot near the ramparts ; but while they were crossing the square the moon shone so bright, and there were so few people upon the move, Marson stopped, observing, it was not worth while going any farther. His antagonist declared himself of the same opinion, instantly flinging off his domino and coat ; Marson followed his example ; the Count gave his friend a hint respecting his adversary's mode of fencing, which was of infinite service to him, being not a little anxious to have the quarrelsome fellow humbled, though he much doubted having his wishes gratified in the present instance, being well acquainted with the skill he had acquired in the use of his sword. But to his no small joy he soon perceived his young friend was more than

than a match for him; for having been warned, he easily parried one of his most skilful manœuvres, wounding him at the same time very severely in the sword arm, which put an immediate end to the contest, Marson's weapon having fallen out of his hand, and himself by the sudden jerk being laid at his conqueror's feet.

"There, Sir," cried the youth, turning to Major Pemberton, "I have disabled your insolent friend; so, have you any inclination to try your skill, because I am vain enough to fancy I could extend you by the side of your friend?"

"Come on, then!" cried the enraged Pemberton, beginning to strip, but had not taken off his coat before they were surrounded by a guard, headed by the commanding officer in garrison.

The Marquis de Clerval having no sooner found what was likely to happen, than

than he had flown to prevent what had already taken place.

The General perceiving who had been conquerors, expressed his satisfaction that he had not arrived in time to prevent Marfan from meeting with what he so justly deserved, giving orders for him to be born away to his quarters, where he was resolved he should remain for some time under an escort, rather than having an intention of bringing him to a court-martial, this having been a premeditated murder, and to a man of the most determined spirit. As for the three Englishmen, his abettors and assistants in his insolence, he declared they would quit Lillo the next morning at break of day, except they wished to visit the prison it contained, which they might depend upon, that if they should ever again enter its gates, he then apologised in the politest manner to the young conqueror, whom he requested

to do him the honour of accompanying him home.

The fracas having been rather publicly discussed in the ball-room, soon after the disputants had gone to settle it with their swords, the generality of the officers present, particularly those of Marson's regiment, were anxious to learn the issue of the duel; they therefore hastened to the field of action, accompanied by Ausby and Murray, who were not among the least impatient to learn how matters had terminated. They all arrived nearly at the same time, soon after the General and the guard, and were just in time to hear the former's apology and invitation; but, to Ausby's great mortification, he could not discover by what title or name the young hero, who was evidently known to the commanding officer, was distinguished; though the very apology that gentlemen had thought it necessary to make, only served to strengthen his

his

his first conjectures: that the stranger was a man of very superior rank, was beyond a doubt; and how few men were the Marquis of Hartley's equals in that respect; and this gentleman's rank, age, features and figure, so exactly tallied with those of that nobleman, he was more than ever convinced it must be him, who might have reasons for not wishing to be known, it would be both impertinent and imprudent to attempt to fathom, except in a public manner, not likely to disconcert any of his Lordship's schemes, who left the square with the General and the Count de Bayengen, and was joined by the Marquis de Clerval, who considered the danger as over.

Aubrey therefore proposed returning to the hall for a short time, to hear what was said about the adventure, being very unwilling to return home till he was rather more satisfied, though he told Mr. Murray he was almost convinced he had been mistaken in his first conjecture.

“Almost, you say—why, surely you can’t now suppose this stranger is an Englishman?”

“He speaks the language like a native, you will allow,” said Ausby.

“Agreed,” said Murray; “but I positively think him a Spaniard, or in that service, as there are both English, Scotch, and Irish, in the Spanish troops; for I don’t think him a Frenchman. But does the nobleman you supposed him to be, wear any foreign order?”

“Not that I know, or ever heard,” replied Ausby.

“Then I am almost at a certainty that the young gentleman in question does.—You know we arrived just as he was putting on his coat, which appeared to me a Spanish undress regimental frock, and I am pretty sure I discerned a star in embroidery, though half concealed by the lapel.”

“Now, how could you be at a certainty of any such thing, any more than myself?”

He

He had got his diamond upon his left arm, the Vankyke embroidered cape of which you fancied, from its position, was a star, by moonlight. It was very easy to make such a mistake; for though I must request you would not mention my suspicions respecting him, they are as strong as ever; I therefore hope we shall meet somebody who will be able to elucidate what to me is really a mystery; they therefore once more mixed with the crowd, and heard the occasion of the late quarrel differently accounted for by every different person who descanted upon it, but who all agreed in rejoicing that the stranger, whom no one seemed to know, had chastised the insolent Marson, and that the commanding officer had banished his over-bearing, and, as it was suspected, swindling associates. Nor could Ausby, though he was particularly anxious in his enquiries, make any discovery very likely either to eradicate or confirm his suspicions.

Some thought the stranger was an Englishman ; others a Spaniard ; his language they adduced in proof of the truth of the former assertion ; his being such an excellent swordsman, as a proof the justice of the latter ; for the English seldom fought except with pistols.

In short it was midnight before Ausby thought of returning to his inn, not at all satisfied respecting the young conqueror, almost persuaded, having, like many of his countrymen, some belief in second-sight, that if it was not the Marquis of Hartley, he should never see that nobleman again ; though he had heard it remarked, every person had their exact likeness in the world, and the person he had just seen was certainly the very counterpart of his friend ; a short time would, however, better enable him to decide how far he had or had not been mistaken. He

perplexed, on many past circumstances, though even that reflection did not remove his perplexity ; and he was only to ponder upon what he could not help considering as a very strange adventure.

CHAP. XXVI.

THE next morning at breakfast, the party having all retired some time before Ausby returned the preceding evening, he related how and where he had spent his time, mentioning the duel, but not the amazing likenesses he had remarked between the conqueror and Lord Hartley.

His Grace therefore merely observed, he thought the swarms of English debtors and swindlers, who infested the frontier towns of France, were a real nuisance, and, upon the whole, more hurtful than beneficial to the kingdom.

Ausby

Ausby then went, according to promise, to visit Mr. Murray, who told him that an hour before, he had met the Count de Bayengen, and the stranger, in the former's cabriolet, driving out of the gate which led to Tournay; therefore he presumed that he had left Lisle, and thought he might now venture to affirm, that Ausby had certainly been mistaken in his overnight conjecture.

“Time will shew,” was the reply.

They soon returned to the Hotel du Portugal. Mr. Murray undertaking to display the Lyons of Lisle to the ladies, whom he pressed so much to dine at his house, and accompany his wife and daughter to the Theatre in the evening, the Duke agreed to spend the day and another night in the city.

The following evening brought them to Peunne, and as Senlis and Chantille were

at the same distance from that town, his Grace took the latter road, that Elinor might have an opportunity of seeing the Prince of Condé's superb castle : their *courier* was therefore ordered thither ; but, to the infinite astonishment of them all, the first person who presented himself at the coach door, when it stopped at the inn facing the castle, was Duncan, who was little less surprised than themselves at having seen their *courier*.

“ For Heaven's sake ! how came you here, my dear fellow,” exclaimed the Duke ; “ did you reach Paris sooner than you expected, and so have come to give us the meeting ?—Is Lord Hartley with you ?—How is her Ladyship ?”

“ Why, faith, grandfather, I believe you have got the distemper of these people, who all prate so fast, I am sure I shall never be able to get in a word edgeways, and you won't allow a body to speak. We thought,

thought, sure enough, to have been first at Paris ; but faith you have overtaken us just in time, for another night would have completely distanced you. We thought you had taken some other road, as nobody upon this had heard or seen any thing of you, for we enquired about you wherever we stopped. We, I say, though I stood with my mouth open, while the other talked ; for, you must know, we set sail with rather a rough breeze, to be sure, but thought to put into port whenever we chose : however, either Neptune, or his lady, Amphitrite, resolved to punish our presumption, and so sent us the deuce knows where, out of our way, and we were very glad at last to take shelter in Bologne, instead of Dieppe harbour, for we were all of us half dead : I, for one, shan't want any more physick these seven years."

" Well, but where are Lord and Lady Hartley, and Mr. Montgomery ?" asked the Duke.

“ Why, there again, I can hardly tell you ; for we have been strangely disturbed. The ladies, who are under my protection, and I, arrived here about two hours’ ago ; but they have given me the slip somewhere : they were upon that beautiful green not a quarter of an hour ago, and we were going to take a little walk ; but I went to see a fine horse that is to be sold, and so lost sight of them, but I was going in search of them when you arrived.”

“ But where is the Marquis ?” enquired Auby.

“ Galloping hither upon the back of a French post-horse, I dare say ; for we expect him every minute, and were to wait here till he joined us.”

Auby became all attention ; but during this curious explanation, the party were conducted into the only parlour the house afforded, which had already been taken possession of by Duncan and the ladies under

der his care ; when the Duke requested to know why the Marquis had suffered them to proceed without him.

“ Why, as I told you before, grandfather, we were forced by stress of weather into a wrong port ; and there the Marquis chanced to meet an old *chum*, I think he called him, who told him a young Baronet of both their acquaintance, who had, a very little time before, prevailed upon a young heiress to accompany him to Flanders, had been arrested for an old debt, and thrown into prison at St. Omer’s, to gratify the spleen of his wife’s guardians : that the lady was all but distracted, having no hopes of procuring his liberty, till she came of age, and she is not more than seventeen, as sum was more than she could raise, ~~and~~ more than this gentleman could spare ; he had wrote to some of the Baronet’s friends in England, who, he hoped, would exert themselves to procure his release.— Well, there needed no more to induce my friend

friend to set out for St. Omer's, having both means and will to relieve his friend : so he sent us forward by this road, while he, attended only by one servant, rode post to St. Omer's, promising to join us here as to night, or to-morrow at farthest, though he did not foresee he should meet with any thing to detain him, and fatigue he sets at defiance upon such occasions."

Ausby was busily employed in comparing circumstances and calculating possibilities, convinced that he should now soon discover whether his late suspicions were ill or well-founded, only wondered the Marquis could have hoped so mislead him, knowing he must learn where he had landed, and that he had quitted his party. How would he look when they met ; surely he would not continue to deny their having seen each other at Lille ; and he was determined not to lead to the subject, as he
did

did not wish to force him to a public explanation.

Duncan entered into various details respecting their journey — They had slept the first night at Montreuil, and so on, regulating the route by a plan the Marquis had laid down for them.

Lady Helen then proposed going in search of the Marchioness and Mrs. Montgomery. The former, Duncan said, was already much better ; indeed it would have been wonderful if she had not disgorged all her complaints, during the three boisterous days they were at sea.

They had, however, scarcely reached the door before they saw Lady Hartley and her friend advancing. As the evening was closing in, this unexpected meeting seemed equally agreeable to both parties : the Marchioness was in much better spirits, and looked much better than when they parted,

parted, entering into several gay details respecting Duncan, whom she averred was a very able *cavalier servante*, as his droll remarks had greatly contributed to support her spirits in the absence of her husband, which she accounted for exactly as he had done, observing that Lord Hartley never minded fatigue, when upon a benevolent errand.

Lady Helen, in her turn, mentioned which road they had taken ; and Elinor declared she liked France better than she expected she should have done.

They had scarcely returned into the parlour or saloon, when Lord Hartley galloped up to the door, mounted as Duncan had foretold ; and after expressing his satisfaction at finding all his friends so comfortable and unexpectedly assembled, told them he had left Amiens before day-break.

As

As Ausby had several times met his eyes while he was speaking, he could not help thinking he had an astonishing command of his countenance, as he appeared neither embarrassed nor confused when they met; nor did he seem inclined to take any notice of their rencontre at Lisle, though possibly, he reflected, he might have some very strong reason for his late behaviour; it might be of consequence, his visiting Lisle should remain a secret.

Thus did he try to find excuses for a man he particularly esteemed: Again he reflected, that it had first been agreed they should all travel together; an alteration had afterwards been proposed by the Marquis, probably to execute some private scheme, though the Marchioness's health was his ostensible reason. Their having been drove up the Channel, might have been privately settled between him and the Captain: their remaining at sea three days,
was

was merely to keep up the farce ; and Lord Donalbain had been invited to be of the party, that the Marchioness might not be left without a protector. The story of the imprisoned Baronet, might have been concerted between his Lordship and the friend he met at Bologne. He had not heard the circumstance mentioned during their stay at St. Omer's, which, he reflected, laid in the direct road to Lisle, from whence, he would almost have ventured any wager, Lord Hartley now came.

Such were Ausby's thoughts, while Ferdinand was paying his first compliments, and answering the general enquiries of the party. The Marchioness then asked whether he had been able to procure Sir Francis Vernon's release.

“Within an hour after he reached St. Omer's,” he replied, “and trusted him and Lady Vernon were now on their road to
London,

London, where he hoped the guardians would be forced to do their ward justice."

The Duke applauded his benevolence, and the rest of the company spoke to the same effect ; when Ausby, who had been eagerly watching his opportunity, said, " I wish we had been fortunate enough, Marquis, to have met at St. Omer's ; for his Grace, to oblige me, took Lisle in our road, that I might have an opportunity of seeing a relation of mine, who has resided there for many years ;" mentioning the exact time they had gone through the first city, and stopped at the last.

" Then I was about twenty-four hours after you," replied Ferdinand ; " but surely you were at Lisle in the evening of the grand masquerade ?"

Ausby looked him full in the face while he answered in the affirmative, adding, " I was

was there, but since you heard of that circumstance, you probably also have heard of the duel which took place the same evening?"

"I did," was the reply, "at Bethune, where I dined with a French nobleman, whose regiment is now in garrison there, and who was prevented by illness from being at the *fête*, and who sincerely rejoiced the Chevalier Marson had been so effectually humbled: his antagonist was a Spanish officer, if I mistake not?"

"So it was supposed, I positively took him for an old acquaintance," replied Ausby, "till he convinced me of my mistake; for he had much more the appearance of an Englishman than a Spaniard."

"Really," said the Marquis, "that is not common to his nation. But pray what gave rise to the quarrel? for of that my friend was ignorant."

"A low swindling, pretended British officer affronted the young Spaniard," said
such

such he was) companion. Mr. Marson was very impertinent, and rendered himself the principal in the affair, which terminated, as your Lordship has heard, in favour of the stranger."

The Marquis's countenance betrayed no signs of what Ausby so strongly suspected, as he appeared to listen as if unacquainted with the particulars he required. If he was, therefore, Marson's conqueror, he was determined not to acknowledge his victory, and to tax him with it would be as absurd as his vain endeavour to make him acknowledge their intimacy at Lisle, though he was more than ever anxious to obtain some relation of this apparent mystery, but found he must trust to time and chance to make the discovery; resolving to take no farther notice, though he did not suffer a word of Lord Hartley's to escape him, and could not help the conversation having naturally from duelling turned upon fencing,

encing, asking Ferdinand, whether he had ever made a study of that science?

“My own inclination having led me into the army,” he replied, “I did make a very particular study of the use of defensive weapons, both upon the continent and at home; and even, I flatter myself, I should not have had much more difficulty in disarming even Marson than his conqueror found. There is a great deal of trick or finesse in the French method of fencing; once aware of their manoeuvres, I think they are easily disarmed, though I never yet fought a duel with a sword. Pistols are so much more common in England, and I am so good a marksman, I should be very sorry to level one of them at the head of any man breathing; but it is the general practice, and a very fair one, never to take aim upon such occasions.”

“Well, ’tis a good thing to know you are so skilful,” said Duncan; “I shall take
care

care now how I quarrel with you, for I should stand a poor chance, never having handled a foil or a pistol."

Thou surely art the man I saw at Lisle, thought Ausby, the very remark he had made upon French fencing was so convincing a proof. The evening, however, went off very gaily, though the suspicions of Ausby inducing him to watch the Marquis with the greatest minuteness, he began to fear he felt a sentiment for the lovely Elinor very inimical to the repose of both, as he also remarked she paid more attention to the elegant Ferdinand than he by any means approved, while the Marchioness had as usual eyes for no one else, nor hardly ears, as at him alone she looked, and to him alone she seemed to listen; indeed, there was something so fascinating in his conversation when he indulged his natural turn for pleasantry, which happened to be particularly the case that evening, Ausby almost

almost wished he could have liked himself ; and thought, if ever woman had reason to be proud of a husband, she was that very one ; and though he had the highest opinion of Elinor's principles, he almost repented having brought her abroad with them, as she would be daily exposed to see a man he thought it next to impossible any of her sex could view with indifference, and after the Lisle adventure he hardly knew what judgment to form of Lord Hartley. However, for the present, he resolved to let matters take their course, and not by premature, and perhaps ill-founded suspicions of his Lordship's honour, destroy the harmony of their party.

The following morning they all walked over the Prince's Castle. The Marquis having experienced no ill effects from his preceding day's fatigue, which had only made him sleep the sounder, he observed, and thought exercise ought to be habitual to a soldier.

soldier. This celebrated feat having been so often described, we shall only observe, Duncan most admired the immense moat, and the tame carp, and also expressed his approbation of the stables, but declared, if he had the prince's income he would much sooner bestow the greater part of it in charity than maintain so numerous and useless a suite, and so large a stud, for the mere convenience of his visitors. Besides, though he acknowledged he should have liked to have seen the immense forest illuminated for one of his Royal Highness's nocturnal hunting parties, he thought it a very idle method of spending his fortune. The Duke was much pleased with the justice of his remarks; and declared, if his sentiments continued the same he should glory in his heir, whose rusticity certainly imperceptibly wore off, having totally left off smoking segars, and drinking gin twist: two passions, he observed, which would only serve to remind him of a very great rascal.

Vol. II. L

rascal, for such he thought Barwell. In the afternoon they pursued their journey to Paris. Lord Hartley's banker had secured him apartments in one of the most airy hotels in the Rue de Richelieu, such being his particular orders; and his Lordship had found a letter at Chantilly according to his desire, giving him this information, and an assurance that every thing would be prepared for their reception whenever they arrived. The Duke, less accustomed to travelling, had not taken the same precaution; he therefore sent his ~~own~~ gentleman forward to procure him good quarters, as near those retained for Lord Hartley as he could suit himself. The man procured two principal floors for their accommodation, in a hotel within a few doors of the one where Lord and Lady Hartley took up their abode, and where the whole party were set down, and drank their tea. The younger gentlemen then took a turn in the Palais Royal, which Duncan agreed

agreed was a very pleasant promenade; and during supper various parties were formed, for the purpose of shewing the ladies and Duncan what was most worthy of notice in Paris and its environs during their stay in that place.

The Marquis of Hartley's curricie, bits of blood, and saddle horses, had preceded them; and Mr. Ausby had also sent forward saddle horses for himself and Duncan, which being arrived, the gentlemen agreed to devote every fine morning to riding, and the less pleasant weather to the viewing the various buildings, &c. with which that gay capital then abounded.

Lord Hartley was the only one of the party who meant to make his appearance at Versailles; which, having been formally introduced there, he considered as a necessary compliment. The Duke had long given up visiting the British Court, therefore he

did not mean to shew himself at that of the Grand Monarque ; and Duncan never having been presented at St. James's, could not, consistent with etiquette, make his first appearance at that of Versailles ; an honour of which he was by no means ambitious, declaring he must speak the language a little better before he could relish French society ; they therefore separated at an early hour, promising to see each other at least once every day.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

THE second morning after their arrival, Duncan and Ausby called upon Lord Hartley soon after breakfast, to enquire if he was inclined for a stroll, as they were going to visit the Military School, and to survey the celebrated dome of the Invalids, preferring a pedestrian excursion at that time. The Marquis having many friends among the French nobility, to whom he had been formerly introduced, had much the least leisure time of any of the gentlemen, but he, notwithstanding, readily agreed to this proposal. They had only just crossed the Pont Royal, when the

Marquis was accosted by two gentlemen, coming out of Mr. ——'s, the banker's ; the one a Welch Baronet, Sir Apfley Warlens, about eight-and twenty, and a near neighbour of Mr. Cameron's, who had returned abroad for the three last years, to relieve that derangement of fortune a life of gambling and dissipation had produced ; the other an Irishman, between forty and fifty, a general officer in the French service, and in the highest favour at that Court, with whom Lord Hailey had got acquainted during his former residence in France. Ausby had also known the latter gentleman when only a colonel, having chanced to spend a short time at Strasbourg, while his regiment was in garrison there.

Count O'Donevan, for such was the officer's name, instantly recollected Ausby, and seemed very happy they had thus unexpectedly met again. The first compliments

ments being over, and the Count having hoped the Marquis of Hartley had not forgotten that he lived in the Chaussee d'Anton, where he should be particularly happy to see him or any of his friends, enquired where they were going. Being informed, they joined their party, wishing, the Count said, to enjoy as much as possible of their company.

The Marquis of Donalbain's late seclusion had been too much canvassed in the polite world not to have reached the ears of Count O'Donevan, who was in habits of intimacy with most people of rank in either France or England; Sir Apfley Watkins had also heard how he had been educated, and the reasons which had induced the Duke to form so strange a scheme; they, therefore, both eyed him more particularly, when introduced to him by Lord Hurdley, and thought, considering all things, he was a very fine young man.

man. The sort of general invitation the Count had given Ferdinand was followed by a request that he would fix an early day for dining at his hotel, as he lived in the most elegant style, and kept the first company in Paris. Of this the Marquis was very sensible, but as he had already several engagements, and as he wished to devote great part of his time to the Marchioness, who, no longer studious, except how to render home and herself most agreeable to him, was become far dearer than she had ever been to him—he pleaded her weak state of health, and the shortness of their stay in Paris, as an excuse for not accepting the General's kind invitation.—“Come, come,” said the General, “I shall not let you off so easily, young gentleman; I know you dine to-day at the Duke of ——’s; he has no wife any more than myself, and I am half your countryman, a few of whom dine with me next Thursday; Sir Apfley Watkins for one, and

and several other young noblemen with whom I know you were at college, and I will therefore take no denial. I also hope the Marquis of Donibain and my old friend Ausby will increase our party."

"Will you be satisfied with my conditional promise," said Ferdinand, "as my coming must depend upon Lady Hartley's health; for if she is particularly weak and low on that day, I shall make a point of not leaving her, otherwise I shall be happy in meeting any of my former friends."

"Why—I must be satisfied, I think," was the reply: "I can only hope her Ladyship will mend so rapidly, that you may no longer think it necessary to confine yourself to her dressing-room. But neither you, my Lord, nor Mr Ausby have the same reasons to prevent you from giving an absolute promise."

Ausby could not think of leaving the Duke of Orkney alone; Duncan looked

at his friend, who guessing he thought it necessary to consult his grandfather before he gave a final answer, said, " Lord Donalbain and I will let you know to-morrow evening, Count, whether you may expect us, as we are neither of us absolutely our own masters."

The matter thus ended, they proceeded on their pedestrian tour, when Duncan was very much pleased with both the military school and the dome, and agreed, upon the whole, that Paris was a more pleasant city for strangers to visit than London, though he would give the preference to the latter for a residence.

As the Count and Sir Apsley were engaged to dine with a party at a restaurateur's, in the Palais Royal, they separated in the Carrousel; when Mr. Ausby declared he thought few men united more agreeable qualities than Count O'Donovan, remark-
ing

ing that the Irish officers in the French service were, in general, very aimable and pleasant companions. Ferdinand perfectly agreed with him, and thought the Welsh Baronet much improved from his residence abroad, as formerly he had a degree of college rust about him, which even his boisterous mirth could not conceal.

The Duke was soon made acquainted with their morning's rencounter; and as he rather wished Duncan should mix in polite company, particularly under Lord Hartley's eye, it was settled they should accept the General's invitation, who was made acquainted with this determination; and at the appointed time, Ferdinand having called for Duncan, they proceeded to the *Chaussée d'Anton*, where they found a much larger party assembled than they had expected, half English, half French. Ferdinand was acquainted, as the Count had foreseen, with most of the latter, but with

young gentleman jump into a coach, which appeared to have been in waiting only a few hundred yards from the garden door, the blinds of which were immediately drawn up, and it drove towards Paris with all imaginable speed.

Ausby returned his book into his pocket, his inclination to read having totally left him, so great had been and was his astonishment. “ Could this be the man of whom he had formed so very high an opinion, and who appeared to have such pretensions to morality, married, besides, to a most amiable woman, whose only study was to please and amuse him, and who frequently reproached herself, Lady Helen had informed him, with having in former times devoted more time to her studies than to render herself agreeable to the man of her choice, whom she ought to have always met with a smile, as she ever parted from him with a sigh ; and a man of his talents

talents particularly wanted to unbend his mind ; in a *tête-à-tête* with so near a relation dry subjects ought to have been banished their private hours, and should in future. Surely, therefore, she did not suspect she had lost his affection ? but might not such a discovery occasion a relapse of her former disorder, if not her death, attached as she avowedly was to her husband, whom he had once feared felt a sentiment of preference for Elinor, very incompatible with those vows which bound him to Lady Hartley."

In this perplexed state of mind he returned to Paris ; for having been a great admirer of the Marquis, he could not bear to find him capable of any action likely to lower him in his esteem. He had certainly chosen a very private situation for his favourite Sultana, who might have followed him to Paris ; perhaps he had sent her the Lisle road, and so had suffered *benevolence*
to

to take him to St. Omer, that he might give her the meeting. Duncan was so frequently out with him, he was probably in all his secrets, and most likely rambled among churches and picture galleries by himself, while his friend visited the gods of his idolatry. Well, he should be able to find the private door again, and he would certainly make some enquiries respecting the inhabitants of the elegant villa, as it might really be doing both Lord Hartley and his wife a very essential service, if he could devise any means to break off so improper a connection, which might, if persevered in, be attended with the most fatal consequences.

Thus resolved, he rode home ;—neither his Grace nor the ladies were returned ; he therefore walked to Lord Hartley's, and in less than five minutes was shewn into their saloon, where he found the Marchioness equipped in her habit, in anxious expectation

pectation of her husband, who was going to drive her out in the curicle, she told Ausby ; but had advised their waiting till the sun had full power, as the morning, though fine, was cold ; he had therefore gone to take a ramble with Lord Donalbain, and she was fearful something had occurred to prevent his returning as he promised.

Mrs. Montgomery remarked, it was not much past one ; but time always crawled with her ladyship when the Marquis was absent.

“ And can he neglect so charming a woman, and for—Oh ’tis impossible, thought Ausby ;” yet he had what might be termed *damning* proofs that he had some other attachment : indeed, he reverted so continually to his late adventure, that he continued to converse with the ladies without hardly knowing what either they or he said ; when Ferdinand hastily entered, saying, “ I hope
I have

I have not kept you waiting, my love, as we rambled much farther than we had proposed." Then, turning to Ausby, said, "how are you, my dear Sir ? I have already inquired after your ladies."

"Yes, and we heard, uncle, you had been out on horseback since I left home," cried Duncan.

The truth will out, thought Ausby, who was astonished at Lord Hartley's command of countenance; and he was now fully convinced that he had not wronged him by his late suspicions : he tried, however, to assume an indifferent air, while he asked,— "Pray where did your Lordship see me, for I certainly have been out on horseback, and have not been long returned ?"

"Though neither Lord Hartley nor I saw you, uncle, Mr. Nelson, who overtook us as we were coming out of the great Mr. Beaujon's fine house, where we have been viewing his pictures, told us he had seen
you

you riding along the *Champs Elysée*, as they call it."

"I certainly did see a gentleman while I was out, whom I thought I knew," replied Ausby ; " but it was in the Bois de Boulogne, not the *Champs Elysée*, and he seemed to be in such haste, and so anxious to avoid notice, that I should have thought it impertinent to have addressed him."

"Why then Nelson hummed, as I suppose," replied Duncan ; " for he told us, he was merely sauntering among the trees, admiring that pretty pavillion belonging to Madam de Bucnoy, did not he Marquis ? and I can't think why he should wish to avoid you."

"Oh, there are times when we wish even to shun the notice of our best friends," cried the Marquis of Hartley, in a gay tone ; " but are you inclined for another ride, Mr. Ausby ? I really think you returned just as it began to grow most pleasant ; therefore, shall I send for your horse,
or

or will you mount mine ? as I am going to drive Lady Hartley to La Meulte."

"Your Lordship will excuse my joining your party, as some letters I have to write requires my presence at home. The Duke, I need not remind you, expects lady Hartley, yourself, and Mrs. Montgomery, to dinner."

"We shall return in time, my dear Sir, so make our best compliments to the ladies."

Ausby bowed and retired, more angry than he would have chosen to acknowledge with both the fascinating Hartley, and the rustic Duncan.—What business had they to have mentioned his having been out ? If they thought to impose upon him with these flimsy stories respecting Nelson, they were very much mistaken : though, in fact, what were Lord Hartley's actions to him ? what right had he to be offended, because

he was not so near perfection as he had once thought him ; he would endeavour to forget having seen him, when he wished, as he had pointedly given him to understand, to escape notice, hurrying home as if anxious to get rid of his disagreeable reflections.

Ferdinand, on his part, could not help saying, Mr. Ausby seemed strangely piqued at not having been addressed by Nelson ; a circumstance he should not have supposed would have given him a moment's concern.

“ Why, he was rather grumpish,” Duncan thought ; and Lady Hartley noticed his absence of mind previous to their return : but the curricule being ready, the subject was dropped.

Duncan accompanied them on horseback ; and after a very pleasant airing, they
returned

returned soon after three to dress for dinner.

Ausby having resolved not again to mention his morning's rencontre, and having got the better of his ill-humour, received them with his accustomed politeness; hoped they had enjoyed their ride, declaring the day had turned out so very fine, he had more than once repented not having accompanied them, particularly as neither the Duke nor the ladies had returned till it was time to dress for dinner.

They, on their part, related where they had been, and how they had been amused, advising the Marchioness to visit the Carthusian convent before she left Paris, as the paintings they had gone to see were infinitely beautiful.

They were rising from table, when a note came from the British Ambassador, inclosing

inclosing five tickets for a masquerade ball, which was to be given by a Russian Princess, previous to her leaving Paris, and who wishing, through the medium of their different Ambassadors, to invite every stranger of distinction then in that metropolis, had sent a certain number of tickets to each of these gentlemen for them to fill up and deliver to such persons as they considered of that denomination. The shortness of the notice, as the *fête* was to take place in two days, the Ambassador apologized for; his note concluded with an intimation, that three similar cards had been sent to the Marquis of Hertley's, who, it was hoped, as well as the younger part of the Orkney party, would grace the *fête* with their company.

The Duke having read his Excellency's letter aloud, next enquired who meant to join the festive group, observing his masquerade days were over.

Lady Helen said it was an amusement she had never been partial to, she should therefore beg leave to decline being of the party ; and her daughter not having yet been introduced to St. James's, she thought it would be improper that she should appear in such a brilliant circle.

“ Well, but the same objection won't prevent me from going, I hope,” cried Duncan. “ I speak French with such prodigious fluency, I think I shall puzzle some of the *Monseurs*.”

“ Most probably,” replied Lady Helen ; “ and I never had the same objection to young gentlemen visiting masquerades, I ever had to young ladies being seen in such places.”

“ Your Lordship means to go, I presume,” turning to Ferdinand.

“ I hardly think I shall,” was the reply, “ except Lady Hattley is inclined to see the humours of a French party under a mask ; tho' I own I am fearful she might expose

excuse herself to take cold, not to mention the unseasonable hours of such diversion for invalids."

"I have not the slightest wish to increase the gay throng, my dear Ferdinand; I must only request my determination may not influence you to stay at home. I have heard you say, that you thought such diversions were better understood in France than in England, suppose, therefore, you accompany Lord Donalban, Mr. Aubrey may also, perhaps, join your party."

"Why both Lord Donalban and myself are conditionally engaged to sup at M. Beaujeon's on that very evening. I must attend the old gentleman, but can very easily excuse my friend."

"Well, but as the masquerade don't begin till twelve," replied Duncan; "we could sup at that gentleman's, and go thither afterwards."

Ausby now conceived he had perfectly fathomed Lord Hartley's design, who, most probably, would spend the evening with his mistress, instead of the great Beaueon, and join them at the masquerade towards morning: beginning to fear Duncan would study vice and immorality, perhaps even more successfully than the Graces, under his highly accomplished friend, whom he feared concealed a very depraved heart and mind, under the most captivating exterior he had ever yet beheld.

Under those reflections, Ausby thought it necessary to conceal his suspicions, until they amounted to absolute certainty, when he should better know how to proceed, he therefore joined in the discourse respecting dress, alledging he was too lazy to think of supporting a character; and as Lord Donalbain was hardly sufficiently acquainted with the French language to enter into the spirit of the diversion, they had better go

and content themselves with
 ,ing at others.

Duncan observed, he should make an
 excellent farmer.

“ Such a character would be by no
 means adapted to the taste of the compa-
 ny,” said the Duke, he therefore strongly
 recommended him to follow Mr. Ausby’s
 advice, as he might, as a farmer, create
 more mirth than he would enjoy.

Duncan therefore very readily gave up the
 point, and the party (the Duke and Ausby
 excepted) adjourned to the opera, which
 Lord Donabain relished far more than the
 French comedy ; after which they separated
 for the night, the young men agreeing to
 ride to Burney, in the morning, if the
 weather proved favourable to their inten-
 tions.

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d—d to you !” cried the hiccupping Duncan : “ what more would you have; except you want a good drubbing? you shall find then, if I wont sign, I can make my *mark*.”

A general laugh ensued ; and Ferdinand, though most quiet, was not the least amused. The Baronet said Lord Donalbain should find he could fight as well as himself, if he was sober, but he scorned to take advantage of any man in liquor. This little fracas quite broke up the party, though every effort was made by the interested designing scoundrels to renew the game. Duncan said, he would go home, staggering towards the Marquis, and calling out, “ Come, my hearty, have you had your nap out ? do rise, for you must be my second in the morning, as, I suppose, Sir Apfley means we should have a pop at each other. D—n me, I am his man,

either at that or boxing, and I will bet him a hundred I disfigure his face at either."

"If you desire it, my Lord, I will wake the Marquis of Hartley," said the Welshman, "whose knowledge of the world will induce him to see justice done me before he suffers you to leave the company. As for your boasting and threats, I despise both of them; I have had more affairs of honour upon my hands than ever you probably will have, and can draw a trigger or a sword with the first champion in Europe."

"You may go the devil! but do come along, Marquis, let us be moving."

Ferdinand did not move; but at the moment Duncan took hold of his arm to raise him, Sir Apfley, under pretence of assisting, very dexterously slipped his hand into his waistcoat pocket, and eased him of a small note book, which he had reason to believe

believe was pretty well filled, nor would he have found himself mistaken had he succeeded as he hoped and expected ; but the Marquis, who had merely remained quiet to see how far they durst go, at the moment he felt the note book drawn from his pocket, before the Baronet could possibly have time to convey it into his own, sprang up, and catching hold of the hand which held the book, which he grasped in such a manner that the culprit could not let it fall, he exclaimed, “ Gentlemen ! I charge Sir Apſley Watkins with having deſigned to rob me, as the pocket-book he now holds he this moment took from my waſtcoat pocket. I little ſuppoſed he had recourſe to ſuch methods to retrieve his former loſſes. I muſt own I ſuſpected ſome foul play was in agitation, which induced me to counterfeit inebriety. I have therefore had an opportunity of watching the progreſs of your game, and am very well aſſured you have all been more or leſs cheated

M 2

cheated by those French gentlemen and this honourable Welshman, who, I suppose, did no more in his late attempt than any of his accomplices would have done had they had a similar opportunity. Had he been in England, I would have delivered him up to the laws of his country ; but as I hope he will never again set his foot in our native isle, or that if he does he will be shunned and despised by this company, I shall, for the present, content myself with inflicting upon him the only punishment now in my power ; leaving you, gentlemen, to follow my example or not, as you think proper :”—giving the Baronet a twist round, and a kick, and some of the others instantly did the same : he was therefore fairly shoved and kicked three times round the room, though many of the gentlemen got falls in endeavouring to play their parts.

The Count hearing the bustle among his
guests,

guests, rose from his prudential chair to enquire the cause. The Marquis having addressed the company in English, none of the French noblemen had chosen to understand that language, therefore declared themselves ignorant of the reason of the fracas. The explanation therefore came from the losing party, who, rather suspecting the General was privy to his guests' designs upon their purses, did not express themselves in the most polite terms. The General, however, readily made excuses for their warmth, and forbid Sir Apſley his house, declaring he thought his countrymen had treated him with too much lenity; had he caught him making the bare attempt he had done upon Lord Hardley, he would have made an example of him; apologizing in the politest manner for having set them down with such a scoundrel. It should however be a warning to him never to suffer another card to be played in his house; and if the English gentlemen then

present thought they had any reason to complain of the French part of the company, he would treat any one they could with certainty accuse of foul play as Lord Hartley had done the Baronet.

Ferdinand was, however, satisfied with having punished the Welshman, therefore merely observed, he hoped his young countrymen would be more upon their guard in future, and would never again play for such considerable sums in a mixed company; and as he was the only one who could have pointed out the nefarious acts that had been put in practice, the Frenchmen were suffered to depart unmolested; the General continuing to inveigh against Sir Apsley, whom he affected to consider as the only guilty person, and with whom he was certainly very much displeased, both for his want of caution and for having suffered himself to be duped by Lord Hartley, who took rather a formal
leave

leave of him, convinced he was as much to blame as any of the acting parties in the late scene, and resolved never more to visit a person who had so totally forfeited his good opinion.

During their drive home, Duncan declared he deserved to be fleeced for having drank so much, and such a mixture ; hoped Ferdinand would not tell his grandfather how foolish he had been, as he really would act with more prudence in future, as he would not intentionally occasion the old gentleman a moment's uneasiness. As for his uncle Ausby's knowing how he had suffered himself to be duped, he should not mind, as he was convinced he would keep his secret, and then enquired whether he ought to pay the Baronet's rascally demand. " Certainly not," replied Ferdinand ; " but there is not the slightest chance of his even giving you the trouble to refuse, as I think we have kicked him

into a sense of his crime ; nay, I even trust he will never make a similar attempt upon any body's pocket-book, as he must know he has had a very narrow escape, but there is really no knowing to what lengths gaming and bad company will lead a man. Sir Apfley is certainly to be pitied, but no one can excuse his late action, admitting it the result of necessity. However, there is no need to mention what has passed to the Duke, we may with truth say we have spent a very jovial day, and that we were very elegantly entertained. You have not been a very considerable loser any more than myself, and we have both purchased experience, admitting we have paid rather a high price for our dinner and wines ; therefore we will not lower the General in the eyes of our friends. It was, however, next to impossible an affair in which such a number of young men had been concerned should remain long a secret. In a very few days, therefore, what had passed

at

at the Count's, to that gentleman's no small mortification, was generally known in Paris, the hundreds that had been lost were magnified into thousands, and the General was by no means exempted from blame ; he therefore thought it most prudent to absent himself from the metropolis for a short time, as did many of his guests ; Sir Apfley having taken the road to Germany, the moment he reached his own lodgings.

The Duke was much rejoiced when he learned how his rustic grandson had behaved when pressed to sign his name, which convinced him he would not suffer himself to be imposed upon even when in liquor ; he therefore foresaw he would not ruin himself as his father had done, particularly while introduced into company under the auspices of the Marquis of Hartley, whose prudence he could not sufficiently admire.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE marchioness mended so rapidly, both in health and spirits, that Ferdinand was in no haste to proceed southward ; nor was the Duke anxious to remind him that they had proposed wintering at Nice ; as he came abroad in a great measure to enjoy his society, and to afford his grandson an opportunity of studying the *graces* under so able a master ; and in Paris Duncan had the advantage of better instructors in every science, than he would have had at Nice.

Ausby and Lady Helena were also perfectly satisfied ; the latter grew every day
more

more attached to the Marchioness of Hartley, and Elinor enjoyed the different amusements which that gayest of all gay cities then afforded, particularly in the company of Lord and Lady Hartley, whom she began to think were a very happy couple, as she one day remarked to Mrs. Montgomery, who replied, “I believe they did not know how dear they were to each other till they were in danger of being separated for ever.”

“Then they were not always so happy as they are now?” she rejoined.

“They always lived upon the very best terms; but I confess I think their mutual affection has increased ever since they have been at Paris.”

“Then it was good for them to be afflicted,” said Elinor, with a sigh, wishing she might be equally fortunate when she entered the marriage state.

Duncan was so fond of frequenting the various spectacles in the evening, and of visiting the delightful environs of Paris on horseback in the forenoon, that he generally rose very early of a morning to get forward with his studies : having the assistance of the best language, dancing and fencing masters, any where to be met with, he had already made great progress, particularly in French.

Ferdinand, when the weather was too unfavourable to drive Lady Hartley in his curicle, generally accompanied Duncan to visit the fine collections of pictures, with which Paris abounded in the most celebrated public buildings.

Ausby devoted the chief of his time to the Duke, who did not like to be left alone, and was not so partial to fights as his grandson ; but one morning, having gone out with his daughter and Elinor, to
shew

shew them the life of St. Bruno, delineated by the masterly hand of Le Suez, upon the windows of the Carthusian Convent, in the Rue D'Enfer, (Duncan being gone to Lord Hartley's, and the weather being remarkably fine for the season) Ausby mounted his horse, to take a solitary ride in the Bois de Boulogne, taking a book in his pocket, according to his general custom, which he pulled out when he reached a private path, that conducted him to the back of some beautiful villas, which he recollected, when he was last in Paris, were supposed to be inhabited by some of the most celebrated courtezans, then in keeping by some of the first nobility. The book he held was a treatise upon morality, which led him, perhaps, seriously to reflect how many vices this gay nation concealed under the most polished exterior ; as he understood the morals of the great were, if possible, more depraved than when he last visited France : his horse, accustomed to saunter along with
the

the bridle upon his neck, proceeded very leisurely, till the sudden opening of a back door, belonging to the garden of one of the houses, during this contemplation, rather startled him, and made Ausby remark a gentleman, who hastily closing the door, put the key into his pocket, and then rather run than walked towards the gate leading to Paris. Notwithstanding the fineness of the morning, and even warmth of the air, he was wrapped in a long grey cloak, of that shape generally denominated by the Parisian *petit maîtres*, *un manteau à bonne fortune*, which were generally like this one *couleur de muraille*. Ausby's horse having, as before observed, stopped rather unexpectedly, he did not attempt to put him in motion again, so much was he struck by the momentary glance he had of the gentleman's features, while he was locking the door, and hoped to get a better view when he returned round ; but in this he was disappointed, as the cloak was so raised

raised as compleatly to hide the lower parts, while a large round hat not less successfully concealed his face, and he immediately took to his heels, as before related.

If ever I saw the Marquis of Hartley, thought the astonished Ausby, that was him : of this, notwithstanding the very imperfect view of his face he had obtained, he was so fully convinced, that he would have called after him, if astonishment at seeing him in such a place, so disguised, and in such haste, had not tied his tongue till it was too late ; at last he put his horse once more in motion, and soon into a trot, resolved to follow him and be still more satisfied, though in his own mind he was as convinced as he had been at Lisle, that it was Lord Hartley, and that affair had never been accounted for to his absolute satisfaction. Yet, what right had he to watch Lord Hartley's actions : the reflection made him check his horse just in time to see the
young